

COMMONWEAL

BOOK ESSAY: CHARLES BAXTER



BY
MOLLY
WINANS

ALL BOOKS

PAUL ELIE ON
DON DELILLO

SUZANNE
KEEN ON
JANE AUSTEN

ROBERT
WILKEN ON
THE POPE

FRANCIS
OAKLEY ON
DENNIS
O'BRIEN

***** 3-DIGIT 458
CW 00079972 12/15/97 0112

ST CHARLES LIBRARY
ST CHARLES SEMINARY
2860 US ROUTE 127
CARTHAGENA

OH 45822-9591



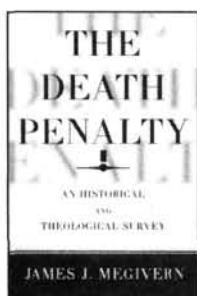


FALL HIGHLIGHTS



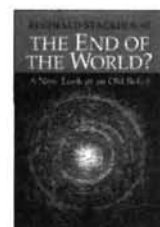
Hope for the Flowers

written and illustrated by Trina Paulus
An Audio with Book Gift Package
Audio read by the author
To celebrate the 25th anniversary of *Hope for the Flowers*, a bestseller with two million copies in print, Paulist Press announces the audio version of this timeless fable of life, death, and rebirth. Stripe and Yellow, two caterpillars on their search for life's meaning, will enchant a whole new generation of readers (and listeners).
Gift Package Audio with Paper edition:
0-8091-8249-1 \$19.95



The Death Penalty

An Historical and Theological Survey
James J. Megivern
A comprehensive new history of the death penalty in the West that provides more material on capital punishment in Western Christian history than is available in any other work in English.
"A great book...solid history and sharp-edged theology..."
—Sr. Helen Prejean, C.S.J.
Author, *DEAD MAN WALKING*
Cloth 0-8091-0487-3 \$29.95



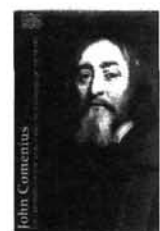
The End of the World?

A New Look at an Old Belief
Reginald Stackhouse
An accessible look at biblical prophecies about the end of the world.
0-8091-3727-5 \$11.95



Images for Change

The Transformation of Society
Rosemary Luling Haughton
A visionary book on how to rebuild our world in a new way.
Cloth 0-8091-0490-3 \$19.95



John Comenius

The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart
translated and introduced by Howard Louthan and Andrea Sterk
Classics of Western Spirituality #90
One of the most significant works in Czech literature.
Cloth 0-8091-0489-X \$24.95;
0-8091-3739-9 \$16.95



Trappist

Living in the Land of Desire
Michael Downey
photographs by Michael Mauney
A striking coffee table book whose prose and photographs draw the reader into the prayerful rhythms of monastic life, as pictured in Mepkin Abbey, Moncks Corner, SC, and show us not only how monasticism is a unique call, but also how its values and virtues echo the universal Christian call to holiness. Black and white and color photos accompany the text.
Cloth 0-8091-0491-1 \$35.00



Entertaining Angels

The Dorothy Day Story
Produced by Ellwood E. Kieser
Now on video, the life of the great social activist and founder of the Catholic Worker movement, starring Moira Kelly and Martin Sheen.
111 minutes PG-13
"A triumphant odyssey."
—ASSOCIATED PRESS
0-8091-8248-3 \$29.95



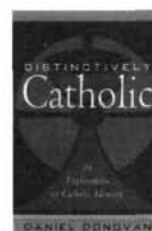
The Roman Catholic Church

Its Origin and Nature
John F. O'Grady
A comprehensive overview of the nature of the Church.
0-8091-3740-2 \$14.95



Motherhood

A Spiritual Journey
Ellyn Sanna
Learning the spiritual lessons of motherhood.
"Beautifully written."
—LIBRARY JOURNAL
Cloth 0-8091-0494-6 \$14.95



Distinctively Catholic

An Exploration of Catholic Identity
Daniel Donovan
How faith is lived and experienced within the Catholic tradition.
0-8091-3750-X \$14.95

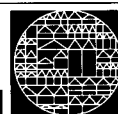
Available at bookstores or



PAULIST PRESS
997 Macarthur Blvd.
Mahwah, N.J. 07430

To order, call 1-800-218-1903 or FAX 1-800-836-3161
e-mail: paulistp@pipeline.com <http://www.paulistpress.com>

COMMONWEAL



November 7, 1997 / Volume CXXIV, Number 19

UPFRONT

Correspondence *Judgment Day, and judgment calls.* 4

Editorial *Getting & spending* 5

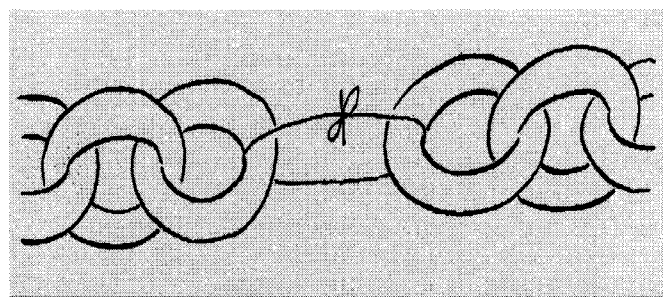
Notebook *I knew Angela*
Margaret O'Brien Steinfelds 7

COLUMNIST

One of life's necessities
John Garvey 8
Remembering a hometown bookstore.

SHORT TAKES

Beyond the handshake
Brian Lennon 9
Are things turning round in Northern Ireland?



Burying the dead
Gabe Huck 10
Why Cardinal Bernardin's funeral still resonates.

ARTICLE

BIGGER THAN WE THINK
Molly Winans 12
Short-story writer and novelist Charles Baxter is best known as a writer's writer. He deserves wider recognition.

POETRY

Law
Elisabeth Murawski 14

THE LAST WORD

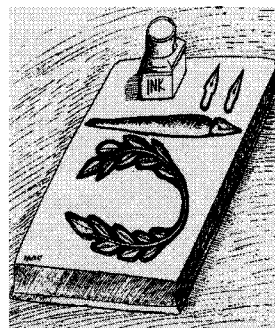
A college president's ABC's
William J. Rewak 47

VERDICTS

MEDIA

Goliath swallows Leviathan
Frank McConnell 17

BOOKS



Underworld
by Don DeLillo
Paul Elie 19

Jane Austen
by David Nokes
Suzanne Keen 23

Saints and Sinners
by Eamon Duffy
Robert Louis Wilken 24

All the Essential Half-Truths about Higher Education
by George Dennis O'Brien
Francis Oakley 26

The Mad Dog
by Heinrich Böll,
translated by Breon Mitchell
Joseph Hynes 28

Canaan
by Geoffrey Hill
David Yezzi 31

The New Majority
edited by Stanley B. Greenberg
and Theda Skocpol
Alan Wolfe 33

The Whole Shebang
by Timothy Ferris
Nancy M. Haegel 35

The End of Art
by Arthur Danto
David Castronovo 37

The Origins of the Urban Crisis
by Thomas Sugrue
John Buell 39

In Brief
Lawrence S. Cunningham 41



To the Editors

God isn't Santa Claus

Thank you for publishing John Garvey's excellent column on Judgment Day [October 10]. It is exactly for such articles that I, though not a Catholic and on a very small pension, subscribe to *Commonweal*.

It is one of the tragedies of the twentieth, soon to be twenty-first century, that God turned into Santa Claus. That makes any rationale for religion, especially Judaism or Christianity, hard to support. The majority of human behaviors are not warm and fuzzy, and neither is God's judgment of them.

Should one of the major objectives for the *Jubilaem* be returning Christianity to a true image of the awesome Jahweh? If so, John Garvey's thesis could well be a cornerstone.

LOVISA KAMENOFF
Brockton, Mass.

Diluting the gospel

John Garvey's column, "Judgment Day" [October 10], echoes a theme I have often pondered. Reduced to morality, Christianity becomes *respectability*. The rich young man of the Gospels was respectable, but that was not enough. To anchor one's life almost exclusively on the moral vi-

tures easily leads to a kind of pharisaic Pelagianism. It is unchristian and cruel to preach morality without rooting morality in the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. It is preaching the law without the power to observe the law. Good News becomes Good Advice.

(REV.) GEORGE AUGER, C.S.V.
Arlington Heights, Ill.

Dismal drama

I would like to disagree with Frank McConnell's review of ABC's "Nothing Sacred" ["Faith and Doubt on the Tube," October 10]. In my opinion it is a dismal drama about three confused, unhappy priests.

Is that what being a disciple of Jesus Christ is all about?

ALIDA MACOR
Martinsville, N.J.

Down with everything

I was interested in the Catholic League's reaction to the program "Nothing Sacred." The show must be doing something right. It seems the League and some other groups are responding to the show as they would to a new pastor: How Catholic!

I foresee the show's going off the air for many reasons, but I do hate that the antagonism toward the program seems to be based on one character, without consideration that this is a program, not an individual. Just

like the church!

I also wish the Catholic League could have used its influence to help the bishops last year in their protests against partial-birth abortion, or even now in supporting boycotts against firms that use unfair labor practices in their production lines. But again, it's not tee vee.

(REV.) JOE TONOS
Jackson, Miss.

Save that show

I really appreciated your recent editorial [October 24] on "Nothing Sacred." It was right on target—just as the show is. My fear is that something as well-written, directed, and acted as this program may not survive on commercial television. One hopes the ratings will pick up (miracles do happen) and we can continue with life in Saint Thomas's Parish.

CATHY STEPANEK
Minnetrista, Minn.

Lonely Frank

In his enthusiasm for "Nothing Sacred," Frank McConnell is almost as alone as the Maytag man. This judgment does not question the skill of his writing nor does it mean that he is wrong about all aspects of the series.

I would suspect, however, that most serious Catholics find the series morally objectionable in some parts, often inaccurate in detail, and too disparately focused to teach even one solid lesson.

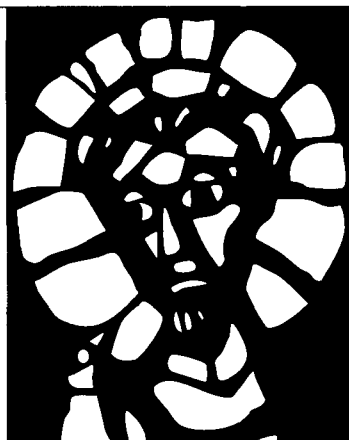
One doesn't deny that there are priests who harbor the same doubts as the rest of us, but I am convinced that is not true of most, nor is it the picture that a serious religious program should promote. One wonders how "Father Ray" ever made it through seminary and was ordained. Has discernment gone out the window? How on earth is his belated personal struggle going to help his less-informed and -educated flock, not to speak of the television audi-

(Continued on page 43)

"Experimenting with tradition since 1898..."

For information about the Franciscan Friars and Sisters of the Atonement and their Associates, contact:

Vocation Director
Graymoor
PO Box 300
Garrison, NY 10524-0300
914 424 3671



STAFF

Editor: Margaret O'Brien Steinfelds

Executive Editor: Paul Baumann

Managing Editor: Patrick Jordan

Production Editor: Tiina Aleman

Senior Writer: Robert G. Hoyt

Poetry: Rosemary Deen

Design: Emil Antonucci

Screen: Richard Alleva

Media: Frank McConnell

Columnists: John Garvey, Abigail

McCarthy, E.J. Dionne, Jr., Sidney

Callahan

Editorial Assistant: Bernard G. Prusak

Staff: Harriette Balsky, Carmen P.

Alava, Sandra Smith

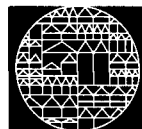
Advertising Manager: Ruth E. Taylor

Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

Commonweal, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly except Christmas/New Year's; and monthly July and August, by Commonwealth Foundation, 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 405, New York, NY, 10115. Telephone: (212) 662-4200. E-mail: commonweal@msn.com. Web: <http://www.commonwealmagazine.org>. Display advertising correspondence should be sent to Ruth E. Taylor, 11 Graffam Rd., So. Portland, ME 04106 (207) 799-4387, classified advertising correspondence to 475 Riverside Dr. POSTMASTER: send address changes to *Commonweal*, 475 Riverside Dr., Room 405, New York, NY 10115.

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest, and Book Review Index. Microfilm from Vol. 1, 1924, to current issues available through University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and on Microfiche from Bell & Howell, Wooster, OH 44691. *Commonweal* articles also are available at many libraries and research facilities on CD-ROM and in electronic data bases. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional offices. Copyright © 1997 Commonwealth Foundation. Single Copy, \$2.25. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., \$44; Canada, \$47; foreign, \$50. Special two-year rate: U.S. \$75; Canada, \$81; foreign, \$87. Annual rates for air-mail delivery outside U.S.: Western Hemisphere, \$84; Europe, \$89; other parts of the world, \$99. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank.

Illustrations: Cover, Antonucci; cover photograph of Charles Baxter, Martha Baxter; p. 3, Bas, Rothco; p. 3, Valerry; p. 6, Ross, Rothco; p. 10, Baloo, Rothco; p. 17, Duff, Rothco; p. 19, photograph of Don DeLillo, Joyce Ravid; p. 24, courtesy Yale University Press; p. 31, Lowry, Rothco; p. 35, Salo, Rothco; columnist portraits, Elaine Mills.



Getting & spending

Laws governing political campaign financing can appear as abstruse as Levitical dietary restrictions. The distinctions between "hard" and "soft" money, "candidate advocacy" and "issue advocacy," even between political parties and certain political action committees (PACs) are difficult enough to draw in the abstract and often become meaningless in practice. After months of congressional and Justice Department investigation into alleged violations of the election finance laws by the Clinton/Gore re-election campaign, much has been learned about the enormous amount of money raised and spent in the 1996 election, but no unambiguous picture of wrongdoing has yet emerged. Did the efforts of the Democratic National Committee and the Clinton-Gore campaign, much of it directed from the White House, stretch the law governing the use of soft money up to the breaking point? It seems clear that it did. Did it violate the letter of the law? Attorney General Janet Reno says her ongoing investigation has turned up no credible evidence that such violations occurred. Republicans scoff loudly at this (while raising a good deal more money than their Democratic rivals and, as House Speaker Newt Gingrich's ethics violations indicate, often employing dubious methods themselves). What the electorate at large makes of it, beyond a growing alienation from both parties, is hard to say.

Much of the reason for such sharply divergent understandings of the facts—aside from politics, of course—rests with the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) and with the Supreme Court's tortuous interpretation of the act's constitutionality. Passed in the aftermath of the Watergate fundraising scandals, FECA reforms limited the amount of money that could be spent by candidates and their supporters. In 1976, however, the Supreme Court (*Buckley v. Valeo*) ruled that certain provisions of FECA were unconstitutional—a violation of the First Amendment's protections of political speech. Individuals, for example, could not be prevented from spending their own money on their own candidacies. Thus political *wunderkinds* such as Ross Perot and Steve Forbes were greatly advantaged. The Court did uphold spending restrictions if a compelling government interest could be strictly established—certain large contributions, for example, could be outlawed because they might create the "appearance of corruption." Thus the Court stipulated that individuals may not contribute more than \$1000 and PACs no more than \$5000 to any one candidate. That's called "hard" money. In principle, however, political money is considered a form of free speech, and the Court said that money spent on issues or to help build political parties—so-called "soft" money—could not be restricted.

Now for the hard part. In the 1996 election the Democratic party allegedly spent \$22 million in "soft" money on pre-election television "issues ads" that were little more than thinly disguised commercials for Clinton's re-election. (According to Common Cause, the Republicans spent \$9 million for similar "issue" ads for Bob Dole.) Legally, as long as the ads refrained from explicitly endorsing Clinton's candidacy, the party could spend as much as it could raise. How that money was raised and spent, who conceived and directed the advertising campaign, and



exactly what role President Bill Clinton played in all of this are the questions at the heart of the ongoing investigations. Republicans charge that Clinton violated FECA by his participation in the soft money effort. But it is not clear what level of involvement candidates are permitted when it comes to soft money expenditures. Historically, both parties have played fast and loose with "issues" advertising, and the Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled that such putatively "independent" party advocacy is protected by the First Amendment.

Given the shell game that campaign financing has become, it is understandable that the McCain-Feingold bill debated in the Senate last month should attract the support of those who understand the need to limit the influence of money. It is far from certain, however, that the bill would not worsen an already dismal situation. In its initial form, McCain-Feingold required that broadcasters provide free television time to candidates willing to accept voluntary limits on campaign spending. However, objections from broadcasters forced that provision to be shelved, and the bill's main thrust is now an outright ban on soft money. But banning soft money is probably unconstitutional and certainly futile. If lobbyists and special interest groups are prohibited from giving to political parties, they will most surely go directly to the

voters themselves. Far from reducing the role of money in politics, the ban on soft money will in all likelihood fatally reduce the influence of political parties, giving us an even more balkanized politics and a further commercialization of political discourse and the public sphere.

McCain-Feingold was closer to the mark in its original version. Money spent on television advertising is what drives the high cost of political campaigns. Free air time is at least potentially one of the best hopes for combating the influence of money. (Full and immediate disclosure of who gives how much to whom is another.) The airwaves, after all, do not belong to the television industry, but to the public. Broadcasters are licensed by the federal government, and they are obligated to provide public-service programming. What could be of greater public service than the promotion of political discourse and debate? Access to free television will also allow political candidates to spend less time raising money and to be less in the debt of their financial backers.

Any hope for campaign finance reform will continue to be hedged in by moneyed interests on one side and the Supreme Court's strict equation between political speech and political spending on the other. Whatever its moral and political merits, the practical and legal obstacles to imposing strict limits on campaign spending seem insurmountable for the moment. But if we cannot limit money, it may still be possible to make money less important. Free television time can help do that. Given the unintended consequences of past campaign spending reforms, the time may be ripe for regulations that combat the power of money, not by restricting spending, but by lowering the cost of competing.

Business Manager Can you turn water into wine?

If so the *Commonweal* needs you. We are looking for a business manager/wizard. A terrific job for a Renaissance person: someone with promotion and business skills committed to working with a small staff and a limited budget to ensure the financial future of the magazine. Previous experience with a magazine, small business, or non-profit organization is a plus.

The business manager will work with the staff on a wide variety of tasks. These include budgeting and finance, marketing and promotion, circulation, fund-raising, development, and general business matters, as well as supervising the business staff. We did mean Renaissance!

Interested applicants should send a résumé and a letter describing his or her suitability for the position and acquaintance, if any, with the magazine. Please include references and salary requirements. Four-day work week. Benefits.

Readers are invited to join in our search by passing on this announcement or by letting us know of potential candidates.

Applications or suggestions should be sent to: Editor, *Commonweal*, 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 405, New York, N.Y. 10115.



Margaret O'Brien Steinfels

I KNEW ANGELA

Did Frank McCourt?

Distance from our families often leads us to make friends, neighbors, and coworkers, into "fictive kin"—honorary sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles, sometimes even surrogate mothers and fathers. This notion of "fictive kin" leapt to mind as I was reading *Angela's Ashes* (Scribner), Frank McCourt's Pulitzer prize-winning memoir. As of October 26 it has been fifty-eight weeks on the *New York Times's* best-seller list—the nonfiction list, that is. As I finished the book, I wondered what McCourt was up to, replacing his real mother with a fictive one.

The tenor of McCourt's story of growing up poor first in Brooklyn, New York, and then in Limerick, Ireland, is foretold in his opening lines: "It was, of course, a miserable childhood: the happy childhood is hardly worth your while. Worse than the ordinary miserable childhood is the miserable Irish childhood, and worse yet is the miserable Irish Catholic childhood." Delicious!

The sobering cast of characters immediately follows: "the shiftless loquacious alcoholic father; the pious defeated mother moaning by the fire; pompous priests; bullying schoolmasters; the English and the terrible things they did to us for eight hundred long years." This sardonic wit held the promise of facts to come.

And "the facts" is why I bought the book, hoping to learn more about Angela, the eponymous matriarch.

The reason I hoped to learn more was that I knew Angela McCourt. In one of those difficult periods of young motherhood, with a child energetic enough for four adults, I rejoiced when Mrs. McCourt, as she was called in our household, appeared at our apartment door two or three afternoons a week to give mother and child a reprieve. She was formidable; her mere physical and psychological presence said, "No nonsense." As I left the house, her young charge would follow me to the door screaming of abandonment, etc. She'd turn to me and say, "Don't worry." To him she'd give a look: This was not the sort of behavior that she'd put up with once this weak-Nelly mother was out of the house. She'd seen worse, she seemed to signal. And evidently she had.

Those who have read *Angela's Ashes* can imagine my surprise as the story unfolds. The take-charge woman of my memory turns out to be a weak-Nelly herself: weepy and fatalistic, she sits a passive witness to her fate, beginning with the choice of Malachy McCourt as a husband and moving on to the deaths of three of her seven children. While Malachy, as many reviewers have pointed out, occupies the emotional center of the story with his engaging tales of the

Uprising and drunken marches and songs urging his children to die for Ireland, Angela is on the periphery, drawn to her hearth wreathed in clouds of cigarette smoke, seemingly as much a victim as her children of this feckless man who spends his pay on drink.

Who then is the real Angela McCourt? The passive mother of *Angela's Ashes* or Mrs. McCourt, the formidable lifesaver who tussled with a lively two-year old while I took refuge at the New York Public Library? Have I created a fictive grandmother?

Or has McCourt created a fictive mother? Is *Angela's Ashes* another example of the now-permeable border that allows fiction and nonfiction to cross over into the other's territory? *The Kiss*, Kathryn Harrison's scandalous memoir of father-daughter incest, appeared previously as a novel; and Sue Halper reports in the *New York Review of Books* (September 25, 1997) that she first read the opening chapters of the novel *The Story of Junk* by Linda Yablonsky as a twenty-page chapter in a nonfiction work.

Can memoirs truly be nonfiction? In what sense can these ego-generated stories be true? or factual? Autobiographies and biographies we expect to be grounded in fact, with dates, letters, and corroborating evidence. But the current spate of memoirs seems to call forth more storytelling than fact-checking. Since the author so often turns out to be the story's long-suffering hero or heroine (witness Mary Gordon's *The Shadow Man*), perhaps everyone

New Ways Ministry

in association with

the Georgetown University Student Association,
Georgetown Pride, and the
Georgetown Gay and Lesbian Law Association
invites you to

BRIDGING the GAP

a theological debate on Homosexuality & Catholicism

Speakers: **James P. Hanigan**, Duquesne University,
Richard A. McCormick, SJ, University of Notre Dame,
and **John J. McNeill**, Theologian and Author.

Questioners: **Kenneth Briggs**, Religion Author,
Ann Rodgers-Melnick, *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*,
and **Larry B. Stammer**, *The Los Angeles Times*.

Moderator: **Camille D'Arienzo, RSM**, Vice-President,
Leadership Conference of Women Religious.

■ Saturday, December 6, 1997 ■

Georgetown University, Washington, DC

for tickets contact New Ways Ministry, 4012 29th Street,
Mt. Rainier, MD 20712, (301) 277-5674

else in the memoir is destined to end as "fictive kin."

In fact, Frank McCourt is a superb storyteller. He and his younger brother, also called Malachy, have toured with "A Couple of Blackguards," a dialogue about their childhoods in Limerick and Brooklyn. Brother Malachy is the most sharply drawn character in *Angela's Ashes*, the pearly-toothed, curly haired little fellow inching Frank from the spotlight with his sunny smile and sweet disposition. He himself is now working on a memoir, working title: "Monks Swim-

ming." Perhaps yet another McCourt family and another Angela will emerge in his memoir. Or perhaps not.

For finally, it is possible that the Angela of *Angela's Ashes* and Mrs. McCourt are one and the same person, nothing fictive about her—simply a new woman once she got Frank out of the house. Indeed, my children's clearest memory of Mrs. McCourt is seeing the formidable woman wreathed in a cloud of cigarette smoke. The ashes are nonfiction—or so it seems. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS

JOHN GARVEY

ONE OF LIFE'S NECESSITIES

A bookstore with personality



When I was a lonely, strange adolescent (is there any other kind?), a few things saved me. One was the fiction of Sherwood Anderson, a respected but still underappreciated writer. His *Winesburg, Ohio* showed that there were stories all around me in a middle-sized Midwestern town. Life wasn't only elsewhere, after all. Art mattered deeply, too; I bought any books and magazines I could that reproduced the works of surrealist and abstract expressionist painters. And poetry: My parents were

friends with a few poets, and I was astonished at the illuminating and beautiful work that could come from such ordinary-seeming adults.

But none of this would have been possible, and my adolescent life certainly would have been a paler and more depleted time, without Shadid's Bookstore.

Shadid's opened when I was about twelve—right in time. Mitch Shadid and his brother Woody had operated newsstands for years (I bought my first copy of *Astounding Science Fiction* at one of them), but Mitch really came into his

own when they opened Shadid's. The only other bookstores in town were a Catholic shop (run by my father, which was a sort of front for his Templegate Publishers), a Protestant shop (run by a local Baptist church), and a stationery store with a corner devoted to best sellers, dictionaries, and atlases.

Shadid's brought to Springfield, Illinois, a concentration of literary quarterlies, art journals, quality paperbacks, and modern poetry, in addition to the usual range of best sellers, science fiction, detective stories, and other bookstore staples. It even carried some theology: I bought John Meyendorff's *The Orthodox Church* there. (Mitch was an Arab-American member of the Antiochian Orthodox church and always wanted to have one or two books about Orthodoxy available.) Shadid's was arguably the best bookstore north of Saint Louis and south of Chicago.

There were some nicely eccentric touches about Shadid's. Once books had been broken into the broadest categories—popular fiction, drama, poetry, etc.—they were divided not alphabetically, by author, but by publisher.

Since I came from a publishing family this made perfect sense to me, and I quickly learned the difference between the style of graphic design favored by Grove Press and the style favored by Viking. It also made for fruitful browsing. Grove published many Kerouac titles, but Shadid's arrangement placed his books near Samuel Beckett, which is how I came to read him. I remember once that when someone told Mitch he could probably pull in more revenue if he devoted less space to the slower-moving quality paperbacks and books of poetry, he said firmly, "This town deserves a good bookstore."



NOW ON VIDEO

Entertaining Angels

The Dorothy Day Story

Produced by Ellwood E. Kieser

The life of the great social activist and founder of the Catholic Worker movement, starring Moira Kelly and Martin Sheen. The film shows Dorothy's struggle as she commits herself to peace-making, battling for justice and hands-on service to the poor.

"...a modern telling of a timeless story, a drama of looking for love in all the wrong places and being found by the most demanding Lover of all."

—Mary Ann Glendon,

NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER

"A triumphant odyssey."

—ASSOCIATED PRESS

"Critic's Choice"

—U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT

A discussion guide is included.

111 minutes PG-13

0-8091-8248-3 \$29.95

Available at bookstores or



PAULIST PRESS
997 Macarthur Blvd.
Mahwah, N.J. 07430

To order, call 1-800-218-1903 or FAX 1-800-836-3161
e-mail: paulistp@pipeline.com <http://www.paulistpress.com>

Bookstores are essential to book lovers. I know you can buy books on the internet, or over the phone, but every serious book lover finds a pleasure unlike any other in browsing through a good bookstore.

There is a legitimate worry that book chains of the Barnes and Noble/Borders sort will kill off good independent stores, and it seems to be happening all over. It happened to Shadid's. Mitch retired, Woody took over, and then sold the store. Its quality declined, and with the advent of a Barnes and Noble store it folded.

It's paradoxical that a phenomenon that has hurt small bookstores has benefited small publishers. The chains buy from small presses in volume, and while there is always the chance that copies

will flood back before the deadline for returns has passed, there is more exposure, and consequently more sales, for small presses.

And for book-lovers the chains can also be a good thing. A Borders store not far from me has a great selection, the salespeople are pretty knowledgeable (this isn't true of most chain stores), and I enjoy spending time there. But there is a danger that even more book publishers will begin publishing with a look only at the bottom line, and they are already looking at the large chains for guidance on what to publish. This isn't encouraging. A rude Barnes and Noble executive, speaking at a recent symposium on the current state of publishing, made a point of citing Cynthia Ozick's meager sales at his chain. The

rudeness came from the fact that Ozick was present.

I am not entirely pessimistic. Good books continue to be published, and a look at the best-seller lists of fifty years ago shows that we haven't fallen from any heights. But the dwindling number of independent bookstores is a real cultural loss. Mitch Shadid loved the book business and did a wonderful job of serving a public who loved the Shadid family and the store they ran together. Much as I appreciate the selection at the Borders I go to, I miss the personal aspect of browsing in a good small shop run by a handful of people I know. I can't think of many commercial enterprises for which I feel lifelong gratitude, but I do feel that way about Shadid's Bookstore, and miss it. □

Brian Lennon

BEYOND THE HANDSHAKE

Grasping for peace in Ulster

All the world now knows that British Prime Minister Tony Blair has shaken the hand of Gerry Adams, the very visible head of Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA. It was a dramatic and potentially significant moment, representing a profound reversal of long-standing British policy. But U-turns of this sort are becoming popular in Northern Ireland. The most recent ones have brought the Nationalists and Unionists to the negotiating table.

This past summer, the British army and the RUC (the Northern Ireland police) allowed a Protestant march through a Catholic area of Portadown at 4:00 o'clock in the morning, having led many to think the Orangemen would be stopped instead. The ten-hour blockade that followed kept Catholics from their local parish and three Masses had to be canceled. Finally an open-air Mass was celebrated surrounded by British army vehicles. To the soldiers and police officers, the priests offered the sign of peace, a gesture not appreciated by all members of the Catholic congregation.

The Orangemen were the next to do a U-turn: They called off their most contentious marches just before July 12, the annual celebration of the Protestant victory in 1690 at the Battle of the Boyne. Then the IRA did a U-turn by declaring a new ceasefire, their second, on July 20.

Then David Trimble, leader of the largest Unionist party, climbed on the bandwagon. Having resolutely maintained

that he would not talk to Sinn Fein until actual decommissioning of weapons had started, Trimble returned in October to the talks in Belfast and sat down at the conference table with them. In doing this, he says he is not talking to Sinn Fein, but confronting and exposing them; but it looks like one more U-turn and a very important one.

Trimble has played an unusually intelligent game since the July IRA ceasefire. He gave no commitment for several weeks on whether or not he would talk to Sinn Fein, and said he would have to consult widely before making a decision. He publicly met the Catholic archbishop of Armagh, Sean Brady, itself a first. During that period of consultation he convinced enough of his parliamentary colleagues that if they pulled out of the talks, the British government would impose something worse than any outcome of talks in which the Unionists participated.

By joining the negotiations, Trimble has snatched the moral high ground from Sinn Fein leader Adams, at least to the extent that Trimble has avoided the charge that the Unionists are simply negative. And he may well be able to split those who want unification with Dublin over the "principle of consent." The principle of consent was spelled out in the 1993 Downing Street Declaration and signed by the British and Irish governments. It specifies that there will be no change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland as a British territory without the consent of both the people of Northern Ireland and of the Republic of Ireland, voting separately. The largest Nationalist group, John Hume's Social Democratic and Labor Party, has also accepted the principle, but Sinn Fein has refused to do so. Its view is that only the whole people of Ireland voting together can decide the status of any part of the island.

Voting together or separately: What difference does it make? For Sinn Fein it means that the Irish will be recognized as an independent people only if they are allowed to vote together. It is for such dubious political ideals that the IRA have



been killing people for years—against the expressed will of the Irish people. Nonetheless, Gerry Adams has shown great skill in persuading the IRA to accept a second ceasefire. He will need all that skill to persuade Republicans as a whole to accept the principle of consent as understood by Dublin and Hume. If Adams fails, two things are likely: Trimble will split the Nationalists and the IRA will go back to violence.

Related to the principle of consent is the issue of respect for Nationalists within Northern Ireland. This may sound vague to outsiders, but Nationalists list a series of issues where they are not treated with respect. These include the Orange marches in Nationalist areas, biased policing practices of the RUC, the need for new North-South structures which Nationalists now see as a way of recognizing their Irish identity, and the release of prisoners. These will be the main battlegrounds in the talks ahead.

The key new factor in the situation, and one that has played a part in all these U-turns, both good and bad, is the new British government. Before last June's election Tony Blair, the first Labor prime minister in fifteen years, looked like a cheap soap salesman. Since taking office he has shown himself to be determined, intelligent, and tough, and he has been greatly helped by his Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam. And unlike former Prime Minister John Major, Blair is not beholden to the Ulster Unionists for a parliamentary majority. Furthermore, the recent referenda in Scotland and Wales, in which Blair won support for devolution—a more decentralized relationship with London—suggest that the U.K. as a whole is going through a period of real change.

The British government at last seems determined to use its considerable leverage to move each side in Northern Ireland forward. For now, the picture looks very positive. Nearly all the parties are at the table. It might be risky but I would bet a few dollars that there will be a new local parliament in Belfast by this time next year. Northern Ireland will still be part of the U.K., there will be some North-South structures in areas like tourism, and Nationalists and Unionists, each with a veto, will be making most of the executive decisions in Northern Ireland—together. If this happens it will be real progress. □

Brian Lennon is a Jesuit working in Northern Ireland. He is author of *After the Ceasefires: Catholics and the Future of Northern Ireland* (Dublin: Columba 1995). He is currently working on a book on reconciliation in South Africa and Northern Ireland.

Gabe Huck

BURYING THE DEAD

How it's done in Chicago

Joseph Bernardin was waked and buried in Chicago a year ago this month with the funeral rites of the Roman Catholic church. This reportorial-like statement affirms something remarkable: Nothing more was needed to mourn and celebrate this much-loved archbishop than the basic rites of the church. Those who gathered found in the rites the expression of their grief, the experience of the hope the church affirms, and the ambiguity of lives lived by faith. The rites were trusted, done with attention, and allowed to do their work.

It was not because Bernardin was an archbishop that the rites spoke loudly, but because he was a baptized Catholic. Again and again they evoked a sense of death as both terrible and beautiful, a passing over in the love of God. This was the message of Bible and cross, of simple pall spread over the coffin, of eucharistic acclamation and Communion table.

The ritual strength experienced at the passing of Cardinal Bernardin happened not because of public attention or the cast of dignitaries, but in spite of them. Ritual that is worthy of the name is not made up for state occasions. It is already known by heart. When those who wear the signs of orders (diaconate, presbyterate, episcopacy) are first perceived as wearing the garments of baptism, then some deeply satisfying way of burying the dead has taken hold in the church.

This funeral in Chicago demonstrated how the renewed Roman rites allow the church to do its work: speaking, singing, processing, and keeping silence together. Such ritual draws out and confirms our praise, our laments, our intercessions. But the rites in question, and their enactment, did not come about by chance. They worked well because Chicago's Office for Divine Worship had attended to them for the previous twenty-seven years.

True, not every wake and funeral Mass in Chicago is done with the same dignity and power as those that surrounded the burial of Cardinal Bernardin. But the cardinal's funeral was beautiful ritual because the church in Chicago has striven for decades to develop good liturgy. As the cardinal's funeral made clear, a long-range, serious, and loving attention to liturgical renewal includes fidelity to the revised Roman rites. Not thoughtless rubricism but comprehension of the roots, intention, flow, ministries, and beauty of the rite makes the difference. Fidelity means, above all, understanding and doing what the documents have told us over and over:

- That the liturgy is the work of an assembly.
- That liturgy is sung, in large part by the assembly, in words and in melodies strong enough to bear the weight of their repetition. (Thus the various moments of this long fu-

neral rite were filled with songs Chicagoans have begun to know by heart; they were not performance compositions meant for other occasions.)

- That the deeds of the liturgy should shape the space, not the space limit the ritual.

- That liturgy requires careful preparation so that it can be done with full devotion and attention.

- That ministers, all of whom are members of the assembly, should be perceived as taking part with the assembly in all the rites.

- That liturgy is ritual (what we know how to do by heart), not entertainment, nostalgia, or ego-gratification. It is not important that liturgy make us feel good; it is essential, however, that, through many repetitions, it prepare us to do good.

- That the liturgy is like a language the baptized learn slowly, a language of the love of God and of God's love for the world, a language that speaks in daily deeds of life and justice. Like a language, liturgy has an order, a rhythm, an interior structure. It can only make full sense in communion with others who are, till death, learning bit by bit to be eloquent in its language.

Chicago was able to bury Cardinal Bernardin in the full strength and beauty of our Roman rites because the ritual was already in our bones, muscles, hearts, and heads. For years, Bernardin had been burying others. Perhaps that is what so readied him to share his dying and death so openly. This is what happens when we grow up and eventually old in communities that bury their loved ones who have fallen asleep in the Lord: We get ready to die ourselves. That is the way ritual works, when we allow it to work.

The good work of years was manifest in another way: The rites were not performed self-consciously. Of course musicians and other artists and helpers were called from various parishes, and of course they came and worked together. Of course there was eloquence in the preaching. In this and much else there was a kind of inclusiveness that echoed Jesus' meals in the Gospels (meals that may seem a little irregular to some). Women were pallbearers (this the cardinal had made clear), and women preached and presided at the services of morning and evening prayer. Given all that, perhaps we should have rejoiced that so many noticed things were out of joint at the funeral Mass itself, when the visible assembly was so heavily clerical and male.

Here in Chicago, the generally inclusive and highly participatory manner of the Bernardin funeral did not seem odd or special. It was a natural expression of how we are learning to be church. For three days, Joseph Bernardin's body lay in the cathedral. During that time the central ritual action was a procession of 100,000 people. But that procession was essentially no different from the procession of 200 or of 20 who walk daily toward the coffins of those they love. Periodically during those days the church gathered to pray: first on receiving the body of Cardinal Bernardin at the cathedral, then for evening and morning prayers and the vigil services. These are the rites that are provided for in the Order

of Christian Funerals for any Catholic who has died. For the cardinal's long wake, ecumenical and interfaith rites were also celebrated. Perhaps these should be seen not as rare exceptions, but as models for what would often be appropriate for ordinary Catholics who are mourned by more than Catholics.

The subject of the many verbs used in the funeral ritual of the Roman rite is the church itself. "We" bury our dead. The "we" is not reserved to the funeral of a bishop; it is used every time a Catholic is buried. And parishes manifest this every Sunday during the intercessory prayers when they name those who have died the previous week.

What happened at the Bernardin rites, then, was not something intended to be unique. Nor was it a collection of various and discrete rites: a wake service, a funeral Mass, the cemetery prayers. For Catholics, ritual can last through days. We experience it each year at the Triduum—from the evening of Holy Thursday until the day of Easter—which is essentially one ritual with many moments, rising and falling.

At the dying of a Christian, the ritual begins with the prayers associated with the believer's last hours. It continues after the person's death, accompanying the preparation of the body for burial, its reception at the church (in the cardinal's case, this included the liturgy of the hours and keeping vigil), the celebration of the Eucharist, and finally the community's procession to the place of burial. This is the pattern for every Catholic's passing; an ensemble of rites that open wide all the human and Christian experiences, from the time the person is dying to the burial. All these form a single ritual.

Such prolonged rites are not meant to be tidy or efficient. That is why Cardinal Bernardin directed that his final procession to the cemetery should pass through city streets, not via an expressway. Nor are the rites always perfectly honed. At the wake for the cardinal, an honor guard initially tried to ward off the people who wanted to touch the coffin and the body. But the people persisted, and the coffin grew gloriously dirty from being touched. This gesture of touching the coffin and the body seems to come instinctively. That is why the funeral rites call for family and others to make the sign of the cross on the body of the deceased. (Before the next cardinal dies, someone has to find alternative ways to use the energy of such honor guards.)

When next you hear someone speaking negatively about the renewal of the liturgy, remember the funeral of Cardinal Bernardin. It demonstrated what happens when the church comes together, well-prepared from good and long-practiced habits, to do fittingly what it must and is privileged to do. Just thirty-some years after Vatican II, what happened in Chicago for three days last November was a sign of hope, of consolation, and of prayer well-made. □

Gabe Huck is the director of Liturgy Training Publications, an agency of the Archdiocese of Chicago. This article was written with assistance from Martin Connell, Maria Leonard, David Philippart, and Vicky Tufano.

BIGGER THAN WE THINK

The world revealed in Charles Baxter's fiction

Molly Winans

Jeanne Palmer, mother of Wyatt, the protagonist of Charles Baxter's 1993 novel, *Shadow Play*, is what most people would call crazy. She lives in a halfway house, makes up words with an easy disregard for whether or not they are understood, and believes that she is drifting on an ocean liner far out at sea. Jeanne cannot be dismissed, however, as a mere eccentric; she makes too much sense for that. After a while, her made-up words don't seem so random and her thought patterns seem almost sensible—as when, for instance, she observes that “the world [is] larger than anyone thinking about it.”

If Baxter comes bearing one gift, it is this central understanding: the world keeps proving itself bigger than the people who think about it. His characters mess up a lot; they stumble, sway, and sink as often as they stride or swim. They are weird, but quiet about it, daily about it. Many of them, in fact, bring to mind what Irish writer Frank O'Connor in his study of the short story, *The Lonely Voice*, called “the Little Man.” They live in the flat Midwest. They sell insurance or make minor decisions in city bureaucracies. They don't finish their dissertations. They cut hair, teach high school, sell cars, get married, get dumped. They are small-town priests and ministers, foundlings and runts, recent college graduates waiting for the moment when they'll know what to do. They are full of wonder and violence, struggling to believe in all sorts of things. If they have resigned themselves to failure, as many of them have, they have done so without giving up their claims on grace.

Baxter's career took wing in 1984 with the publication of his first collection of short stories, *Harmony of the World*. Since that time, he has published reliably every two to three years: three more collections of stories (*Through the Safety Net*, *A Relative Stranger*, *Believers*); two novels (*First Light*, *Shadow Play*); a poetry collection (*Imaginary Paintings*); and a collection of essays (*Burning Down the House*). A prize-winner whose stories have twice appeared in *Best American Short Stories*, a recipient of NEA and Guggenheim grants, director of the writing program at the University of Michigan, Baxter has still somehow remained a hidden treasure. He is a “writer's writer”—he has earned consistently glowing praise from critics and little popular name recognition. As Francine Prose announces in her recent review of *Believers*

in the *New York Times Book Review*, “there are some writers so gifted that even their colleagues agree: really, they should be better known, their books should be best sellers.”

Baxter is first and foremost a short-story writer; it is the perfect vehicle for what he does best, unveiling but not unraveling the tight knot of mystery that lies at the heart of every insight. “Strangeness of behavior,” Frank O'Connor wrote, “is the very lifeblood of the short story.” Baxter's fiction illustrates that true strangeness, the extra-ordinary, is arrived at only *through* the ordinary. In the story “Fenstad's Mother,” for instance, a churchgoing son takes his irreverent, socially progressive mother to visit an extension class in English composition he teaches. The class revolves around Fenstad's unsuccessful attempts to show his students the faulty logic in the statement, “Most people have a unique problem.” As his students do, his mother embraces the spirit of the thought while Fenstad hammers away at its technical illogic. It's a funny moment, but Baxter is interested in more than a humorous mother-son psychodrama here—he's interested in the spiritual implications—and ironies—of sensibility. The churchgoing son is plugging away as if duty and reason were all he needed; he must learn the habit of mysticism from his atheist mother. At the end of the story, Fenstad goes to his mother's apartment to find a student of his, with whom his mother has struck up a friendship. The

Books discussed in this essay

Through the Safety Net

Penguin Books (paper), \$6.95, 216 pp.

First Light

Penguin Books (paper), \$11.95, 288 pp.

A Relative Stranger

W.W. Norton & Company, \$19.95, 223 pp.

Shadow Play

W.W. Norton & Company, \$21.95, 399 pp.

Believers

Pantheon Books, \$23, 272 pp.

Burning Down the House

Graywolf Press, \$22.95, 245 pp.

Molly Winans teaches English and is director of publications at the Kingswood-Oxford School in West Hartford, Connecticut.

student is playing jazz records for her, and as Fenstad's mother sees her son enter, she says, "This is my unique problem, Harry. I never heard enough jazz. What glimpses!"

Baxter understands the importance of *glimpses*. His characters are constantly turning themselves—or finding themselves turned—toward mystery. Conclusive insight, Baxter maintains in the essay "Against Epiphanies," is the real illusion; a fiction writer's fealty should be to giving events the "dignity of their own complexity." As a writer, he is unfailingly true to this mission. In the story "Flood Show," a kindhearted family man discovers after fourteen years that he has never gotten over his first wife, who left him suddenly. In "A Relative Stranger" a man adopted as a baby gets a call from someone claiming to be his brother and receives the man with a rich mix of skepticism, anger, anxiety, and reluctant hope. "I don't like people watching me when they think they're going to get a skeleton key to my character," he explains. "I'm not a door and I won't be opened that easily."

Flannery O'Connor, in her 1969 collection of essays, *Mystery and Manners*, wrote that "the sharper the light of faith, the more glaring are apt to be the distortions the writer sees in the life around him." Baxter is keenly aware of distortions, always mindful not to exaggerate them but to observe them with care and precision. His fictional worlds are perfectly familiar yet a little odd. His characters shoot at nuclear reactors, spend the night at the zoo, sit on benches in blizzards. In "Gryphon," probably Baxter's best-known story, a substitute fourth-grade teacher named Miss Ferenczi, a strange woman who carries a checkerboard lunch box and accuses a group of boys of forming a "cabal" before she has even introduced herself, announces to a class of slightly stunned students that sometimes six multiplied by eleven equals sixty-eight—a "substitute fact," as she calls it. Baxter finds first the humor then the eeriness in the moment, the creepy ease with which, as class proceeds, she manipulates the children's minds. Her secret is to find a strange truth around which to coil her elaborate, wild "facts." Venus flytraps lead her to the cloud cover around Venus, which houses angels, who sometimes travel to Earth to attend concerts, where they sit in the aisles and no one pays attention to them. Baxter has said in an interview that he thinks of Miss Ferenczi as "half miracle, half monster." We understand the *miracle* part of the equation through the story's unnamed narrator, who finds joy in the substitute teacher's hyper-reality and defends her against detractors; Miss Ferenczi's world, where the facts of science are mysterious enough to keep good company with zany inanities like angels in the aisles of concert halls, is a miracle.

But mystery can be *monstrous* as well; "the unexpected," writes Baxter elsewhere, "is seldom beautiful." When Miss Ferenczi, using Tarot cards, tells a boy named Wayne he will soon die, the story delivers a moment of shocking cruelty. But Baxter doesn't stop there. When Wayne tells the princi-

"[A] stimulating history of the impact made by gifted thinkers who became Catholics on both sides of the Atlantic between 1825 and 1962, and of the problems they faced in their new Church and in society. . . . Allitt makes good use of the extensive scholarship available on many of these figures, adding his own incisive observations and showing how their work tried but failed to restore the cultural visibility that the Church had enjoyed in former centuries."

—Kirkus Reviews



\$35.00 • At bookstores, or call (800) 666-2211
www.cornellpress.cornell.edu

CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS
SAGE HOUSE • 512 E. STATE ST. • ITHACA, NY 14850



SPiritUAL LEGACY SERIES

A Crossroad Selection

Renate Craine

Hildegard

Prophet of the Cosmic Christ

A fascinating introduction to the visionary and prophet, artist and healer, whose books and music are more popular today than when first written.

0-8245-1673-7 \$12.95 paperback



Benedict Groeschel
Augustine
Essential Writings

"An important introduction to Augustine for those who do not know him.

Recommended."

—The Reader's Review

0-8245-1490-4 \$19.95 hardcover



Robert Barron
Thomas Aquinas
Spiritual Master

First-place Catholic Book Award Winner 1997. "Barron's solid and accessible study is itself a fine example of what he admires in his master."

—Michael Downey, *America*

0-8245-2504-3 \$14.95 paperback

THE CROSSROAD PUBLISHING COMPANY
370 Lexington Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10017
at bookstores or Call 1-(800)-395-0690

Elisabeth Murawski Law

I grow small.
Against the heavens' yardstick
I have no hands.

Now I am smaller than
the chair,
no more than a mouse
beginning to fear
the dense quiet.

I am eaten by the cat.

I am the purr.

I disappear
through the eye of a needle:
holding the earth together
by an invisible thread.

pal what Miss Ferenczi has done, the youthful narrator attacks him for a coward. Boyhood alliance against adults dissolves—the undertow of the fabulous has pulled the narrator out to sea.

Miss Ferenczi presents an extreme case—a mystic, a charlatan, a woman determined to be weird. Usually, Baxter's characters seem unlikely bearers of mystery, plunged into it by accident. Baxter's fiction is rife with accident; without ever seeming merely random, it manages to remain true to the way things *happen* to happen. In "Snow," a bored twelve-year-old tags along with his older brother and girlfriend to see the two-door Impala that went through the ice on the lake, and learns a lesson in the "desperate and beautiful." In "The Next Building I Plan to Bomb," a man comes upon those ominous words on a windblown scrap of paper, an accident which ultimately propels him into angry uncertainty about the worth of his life. In "Winter Journey," Harrelson, described with typical rueful acuity as a "perpetual Ph.D. student, poverty-stricken dissertation non-finisher, academic man of all work, gourmand," drives drunk in a snowstorm to rescue a soon-to-be-ex-fiancée and manages to hit two parked cars and run *over* a rat-sized dog without running it *down*. Accidents are dream-like curiosities to Har-

relson, part of a universe run by "his familiars in the spirit world," a kind but bumbling crew.

Still, accident reveals mystery only to those willing to look. Some refuse, clinging to a false innocence. For Baxter, spiritual life demands a capacity for grace, a willingness to be open to what you don't understand. Baxter wrestles with innocence, that state we Americans romanticize so fervently. He sees innocence as complicated—as is the fall from it. The fall is not always one dramatic moment; characters fall and fall and fall from innocence, in moments that parcel themselves out over time. Wisdom, when it is to be had, lies not in the discovery of answers but in the will to struggle for them, to join what Flannery O'Connor calls "our slow participation in the Redemption." Wisdom relies on faith; and faith, as O'Connor insists, "is a walking in darkness and not a theological solution to mystery."

Some of Baxter's characters can walk this walk, and some cannot. In "Cataract," Walter Lundholme tries to retire from a career spent "developing real-estate properties along high intensity freeways" into a glorious life of art (he envisions himself painting like "Winston Churchill on the cliffs at Cornwall"), only to find he cannot stomach what he discovers in nature. He wants to see what he is "supposed" to see and paint it, but the world won't stand still for that. Walter's wife looks at his two artistic efforts and discovers a ghostly, "unpleasant figure" in one and a "horrible" screaming face in the other. Walter can't see anything but woods and water; but when she presents her ultimatum—"Don't paint until you can paint a picture that doesn't have this dreadfulness in it"—he concedes.

So while Walter has fantasized about a retirement into more spiritual pursuits, he is in fact immune to the actual life of the spirit. The figure and face in his paintings are part of an inner life that transcends real estate and business—but Walter won't let himself see these spirits, and his wife holds them in disdain. When Walter returns to the rented farmhouse where he did the paintings he meets the owner's son, a lonely boy obsessed with birds. (Grace often comes in on wings in Baxter's stories. Birds abound, a teasing presence, sometimes sprightly, sometimes predatory.) When Walter goes into the boy's room, he sees a huge collage of birds, photos scissored from magazines adorning the wall from floor to ceiling. In the midst of this collage, the boy has taped up a left-profile picture of Jesus: a simple, unrestrained expression of the life of the spirit. Walter rejects this boy completely, first with a brusque, "I don't know anything about birds," and then with a pat insincerity: "they are the most beautiful of God's creations." On his ride home he drives by a car accident, sees men bent over something he cannot see, and "keeps his eyes fixed ahead." Lundholme maintains innocence by force, but there is nothing innocent about him. He is responsible for his failings; the cataracts of the story's title are not suffered but self-imposed. Spiritual blindness should not be confused with "a walking in darkness."

It is easy to discuss Baxter's stories in theological terms—innocence, faith, evil, mystery, redemption—and the stories themselves often speak explicitly in those categories. Characters contemplate reincarnation, attempt to rewrite the Bible, sit down to compose their sermons for Sunday. Nowhere do theology and the struggle with innocence combine more brilliantly, however, than in *Believers*, Baxter's recent novella. The story revolves around Franz Pielke, a Catholic priest who loses his faith, leaves the church, marries, and raises a family. It is Franz Pielke's son, in fact, who narrates the story; Jack Pielke tells his father's story out of a "desperate" need to understand his father's life. "This is a story about Goebbels, my father, my mother, and two Americans...a story about fascism, and believers, a story of the American Midwest, and of how I came to be conceived and brought into the world by a priest."

Jack Pielke's tone is urgent, his devotion to his father fervent. Franz Pielke was an honorable man, Jack tells us, a man childlike in his goodness, who possessed a "gift for rapture." The son of immigrant German farmers, Franz grew up in Michigan, a nature-loving innocent, a daydreamer in a land of industry. But even as a young boy, Franz was a complicated sort of innocent. Jack gazes at the drawings his father made in his childhood notebooks and sees predatory birds, "eating machines, feathered bundles of blind appetite," and their prey, "waiting for a slaughtering and devouring attention to descend upon them."

Baxter knows that innocence and an understanding of nature's inherent violence can coexist; he never confounds innocence and naïveté. Franz Pielke looks at the world without sanitizing it—he sees predators, experiences severe pain (his leg is crushed by a falling tree), and he remains an innocent.

It is not until he meets Burton and Mary Ellen Jordan that his innocence is truly tested. They are a bored pair of aristocrats who move into a lavish estate in Franz Pielke's, now *Father Pielke's*, parish. The Jordans decide to befriend the young priest. Mary Ellen is a hard-eyed woman with a wolf's smile; Burton is a sportsman with a Hobbesian social view and an admiration for Hitler's Germany. Father Pielke baffles them with his stillness, his rapture, his insistence that "it's not our destiny to behave like brutes," and they cannot leave him alone. They seem intent on debunking his innocence. In the summer of 1938, the Jordans arrange a trip to Germany and persuade Father Pielke, by means of a generous donation to the archdiocese, to accompany them. God is "a corpse" in this Germany; it is a country where cries for help go unanswered, and laughter sounds like "dogs barking." Father Pielke, deeply unsettled, simply cannot survive the moment when he sees Mary Ellen, "like a spectator at a sporting event," take pleasure in the torture of a Jew, as Burton, the loving husband, gives her an indulgent wink. When Father Pielke leaps into the crowd to help the victim, he feels the "dove flutter" in his heart—the same dove he drew as a

Fall Books from Notre Dame

American Indian Catholics, Volume 2 THE PATHS OF KATERI'S KIN

Christopher Vecsey

"In a beautifully written account, the author focuses on the wide impact of Catholicism and explores the many varieties of American Indian responses to it. The Indians' full range of religious adaptations to Catholicism is fully described."

—Laurence M. Hauptman
Professor of History, SUNY New Paltz

0-268-02850-8 \$40.00 cloth **Dec. '97**

ROMANO GUARDINI A Precursor of Vatican II

Robert A. Krieg, C.S.C.

"Krieg has made a valuable contribution to the history of twentieth-century Catholic thought. His is a well-informed and balanced account of Romano Guardini's role in modern Catholicism as one who took up a real dialogue with the contemporary world when it was almost unheard of to do so."

—Paul Misner
Professor of Theology, Marquette University

0-268-01661-5 \$18.00 paper **Nov. '97**

BORN OF COMMON HUNGERS Benedictine Women in Search of Connections

**Photographs by Annette Brophy
Essays by Mara Faulkner**

"Born of Common Hungers is a profoundly beautiful book! With artistry and spiritual insight it discovers links among women spanning centuries, cultures, and continents. This is a volume to savor and to share."

—Anne E. Patrick
Professor of Religion, Carleton College

0-268-00703-9 \$40.00 cloth
0-268-00704-7 \$25.00 paper **Nov. '97**

THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME PRESS

Chicago Distribution Center

11030 S. Langley Ave., Chicago, IL 60628

phone: (773) 568-1550 fax: (800) 621-8476

<http://www.nd.edu/~undpress>

boy, always waiting for slaughter.

The scene shows Baxter to be the kind of writer Flannery O'Connor praises in *Mystery and Manners*, one who is "interested in characters who are forced out to meet evil and grace and who act on a trust beyond themselves—whether they know very clearly what it is they act upon or not." Faith cannot *depend* on innocence and survive. Father Pielke's innocence is large enough, strong enough, to hold the knowledge that his own father couldn't save him from falling trees, that predators among animals and men have their day, even that violence can bring joy. But his innocence cannot hold, his faith cannot survive Burton's wink, suffering's "conversion into spectacle," a man's smug, superior, joking pleasure in evil. Franz finally loses his "boyishness and his assistant-to-the-angels look" forever, loses his soul and his God. The inner story of the novella ends when Father Pielke returns to America. Leaving the church, he marries and raises two children. In the outer story, Jack's search takes him to a now-ancient Burton Jordan, who discloses in a rambling monologue that Mary Ellen herself was a Jew. Jack, "hopelessly tangled," takes in this complication without understanding it, and returns to his father less innocent but willing to live with those things that make the world bigger than his capacity to think about it.

This same preoccupation with innocence and evil moves through *Shadow Play*, Baxter's 1993 novel chronicling dire doings in a small Midwestern town. *Shadow Play*, which tells the allegorical tale of a deal with a modern-day devil, offers as its protagonist Wyatt Palmer, a man "so normal it's strange." Wyatt is a failed artist who, stuck in Plato's cave, draws only shadows, can't render the objects that cast them. Having returned to his tiny Midwestern home, he toils away as assistant to the city manager, defying his parents' eccentricities—his mother's craziness and the secretive sorrow of his long-dead father.

This soulless normalcy calls the devil up in the guise of an old high school acquaintance named Jerry Schwartzwalder. Jerry has a deal. He wants Wyatt to play middleman for him, bringing a chemical plant to economically depressed Five Oaks. Wyatt makes the deal out of a self-indulgent sense of responsibility, both to the town generally and specifically to his cousin Cyril, a jobless, kind, good-for-nothing drifter. The chemical plant is Cyril's chance at a future, but what it means for the town is less clear: Wyatt's sacrifice is extracted in a promise not to whine if a little "hoohah" gets spilled. "We've got some VOCs," Jerry informs him over lunch, "some volatile organic compounds they call them, and they can be pesky and produce airborne toxins now and then."

Wyatt's innocence is a sham. His naïveté both protects him from the world and allows him to fool it. And false innocence

**The fall is not
always one
dramatic moment;
characters fall and
fall and fall from
innocence, in
moments that
parcel themselves
out over time.**

given responsibility proves dangerous. When Wyatt shakes Jerry Schwartzwalder's hand, he does so *knowingly*—even if that knowingness is dim, a sensation "part idea, part pure feeling" that "large gears [are] about to mesh and turn...souls [be] given and exchanged." In allegory, such action demands punishment. When Cyril falls ill—the first victim of the chemical "hoohah"—Wyatt is forced to face not the easy martyrdom of supporting Cyril financially but *actual* sacrifice. Cyril demands two things of him: first that he confront the town's tight-lipped, we-need-the-jobs passivity and *do something* about the plant; second that he

help Cyril, ravaged by cancer, commit suicide.

Driven out of his complacency, Wyatt turns toward violence; he has met evil and he thinks he can burn it away. But even here he bumbles it; trying to set fire to Schwartzwalder's house, he only succeeds in burning to death a friendly, curious, stray dog. His attempts to bring down the chemical plant are similarly ineffective; the judge and jury yawn, and Wyatt comes to the sobering realization that in Five Oaks, "God had died and taken evil with him, and without evil, there was nothing to fight, no place to set your foot. Nothing was wrong anymore. Even child molesters had a point of view, a position, a claim for conscious attention. Instead of evil, there were potato chips and dip and therapy."

Baxter takes on big subjects in this novel—environmental politics, mental health, organized religion, capitalism, materialism, monogamy, assisted suicide—but those subjects serve as a lens to focus his central concern, the life of the soul. Wyatt manages to emerge somewhat wiser from the harrowing events in Five Oaks, in part by realizing that he was no victim or pawn: he *caused* things. Ultimately Wyatt moves to "ungovernable" New York City, city of "sins and noises"; there he finds that it is "a relief to live in the fallen world." Facing evil finally is what saves him.

Baxter believes in evil, in the need for villains and the accompanying "trust beyond ourselves" it takes to face them. Without such antagonists, stories get sucked into the realms of privacy and self-pity. If a writer's job is to take on the "God viewpoint," Baxter argues in his essay "Maps and Legends of Hell: Notes on Melodrama," it is important to remember that "the history of Christianity is nagged by the story of God's refusal to forgive everybody." The existence of evil is "one of Christianity's central mysteries and articles of faith." It is equally central to the stories we are compelled to tell in the hope of making sense of our lives.

Not that Baxter is mainly unforgiving. His view of life is full of gentleness and humor; in his fiction, forgiveness, acceptance, redemption give defeat its density, failure its grace. His characters find relief to the extent to which they let themselves face the mystery—and Baxter's faith as a writer rests in watching them, rapt, while they walk on in darkness. □

Frank McConnell



GOLIATH SWALLOWS LEVIATHAN

Conglomerates and the Media

Millennial fever is upon us, and it's pandemic. Never mind that Clio, the Muse of history, doesn't really pay much mind to our highly arbitrary calendrical reckonings. We want her to, and I'm not sure whether completely resisting that visionary tug is the sign of a resolute mind or a dull one. That tug helps explain the sad ecstasy of the Hale-Boppers of the Heaven's Gate cult; and, at another (not higher) level, the recent elaborate academic debate about whether or not we are living through "The End of History."

It's also the context in which to read the fascinating, feisty collection of essays, *Conglomerates and the Media*, by Erik Barnouw and others (The New Press, \$23, 208 pp.). Not that *Conglomerates* is "about" the millennium in any explicit way: In fact I'm not sure the word even appears in its pages. But if there really is a potentially massive transformation of life pressing on us here at the turn of the century, it's got to be the current explosion, prolifera-

tion, and interrelation of information technologies, from the printed book through the compact disc and the TV sitcom to the Internet, that seem to be changing our conception of "reality" (as Nabokov says, the only word that should always be enclosed in quotes) altogether.

And is that transformation of consciousness—the mediatization of the planet—a good thing or bad? Thirty years ago, Marshall McLuhan told us that the growth of electronic media would eventually make the world a "global village": smarmy and homey—unless the village is named Salem. And twenty years later we had—or you did, if you own a personal computer—the "worldwide web," where everybody can talk to everybody: splendid, except that a web can be, if produced by an artisan, creative, but if by a spider, a trap. And then Bill Gates announced the apocalyptic coming of the information superhighway: but the point of getting on a highway is that you know where it's going; so what kind of global village—what Gates's heaven—



JESUS

JESUS AT THIRTY
A Psychological and Historical Portrait
JOHN W. MILLER
"Adds a judicious application of psychological insight to the task of historical biblical scholarship."
— WAYNE ROLLINS
Assumption College, Worcester, MA
0-8006-3107-2 jacketed hardcover
\$18.00 (\$24.75 Canada)

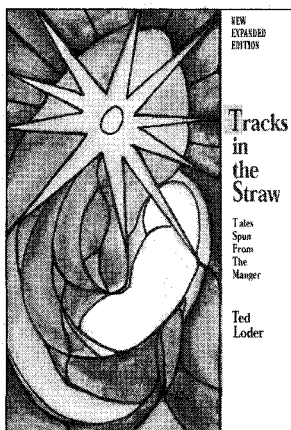
JESUS AND THE VICTORY OF GOD
Christian Origins and the Question of God, Volume 2
N. T. WRIGHT
"Wright's sweeping hypothesis, presented in delightfully lucid prose, sets a benchmark for all subsequent investigations of the historical Jesus."
— RICHARD B. HAYS
0-8006-2682-6 paper \$39.00
(\$53.50 Canada)
0-8006-3089-0 hardcover \$65.00
(\$89.00 Can.)

THE PARABLES OF JESUS
Recovering the Art of Listening
RICHARD Q. FORD
"With care, delicacy, and tenderness, Richard Ford listens to parable characters reacting to one another... and teaches us all to shut up long enough to hear another's voice."
— JOHN DOMINIC CROSSAN
DePaul University
0-8006-2938-8
paper \$18.00
(\$24.75 Can.)

FORTRESS PRESS
At bookstores or from:
Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
Box 1209
Minneapolis, MN 55440-1209
1-800-328-4648
Postage and handling additional.

New Revised Edition

Christmas Stories for the Jaded



Tracks in the Straw Tales Spun from the Manger

BY TED LODER
author of *Guerrillas of Grace*

If you've listened to the Christmas story so many times that there is no wonder left in it, then you need to hear it the way minister extraordinaire Ted Loder tells it.

Explore the deeper meaning of Christmas through the eyes of the unsung participants in the nativity story: midwife, tentbearer to the Magi, stable hand—even the stable animals.

Arranged into 24 readings for optional Advent usage, this modern-day Christmas classic is a gift of fresh inspiration for church programs and family sharing.

"Every once in a while a Christmas book comes along . . . that leaves us breathless with the joy of it. *Tracks in the Straw* is such a book."

—Faith at Work Magazine



\$12.95 pb • 6 X 9 • 176 pp
ISBN 1-880913-29-1

Available in bookstores
or call Innisfree Press
1-800-367-5872
to order.

is this one leading to?

None of the fine media critics in *Conglomerates* plays with these now-permanent metaphors for the infotech universe. They're smarter, and focused on the troubling question of what happens to "reality" when "reality" is both defined by its transmission by the media and determined by an ever-smaller number of massive, transnational culture trusts. "Who monopolized *Time Life* and *Fortune*?" asked William S. Burroughs in *Naked Lunch* (1958). "News is the only constitutionally protected product in America," writes essayist Barnouw. "News matters, though today, it is treated as just another commodity."

That's the key sentence of this collection. Corporate apparatchiks love the word "synergy," for the profitable blending of infotech delivery systems. "Synergy" means this: Disney now owns ABC and ABC owns a number of major publishing companies and the *Washington Post* and the *Post* corporation runs *Newsweek*, but is itself—somewhere up or down the line—linked with bigger publishing trusts and fast-food empires, and so on into the Mandelbrot Set of infinitely finer-tuned self-recapitulations.

The good news is that after ABC and *Newsweek* tell you Disney's latest film is fun, you'll see it, enjoy it, and when you take the kids to Burger King you'll get a "Pocahontas" Pepsi cup—free! The bad news is that experience is, increasingly, something *sold* to you: and sold in an ever-smaller store of wares. (Nor is ABC the only case. General Electric owns NBC, CBS belongs to Westinghouse, Warner owns *Time*—everybody, in short, is in bed with everybody.)

Sounds conspiratorial and apocalyptic, doesn't it? And it's all true: not a Burroughs or Pynchon fantasy but traceable in *Variety* and the *Wall Street Journal* alike. So far the Internet seems exempt from the mergermania, although the recent bailout (and swallowing?) of Apple by Microsoft—which happened after this book was put together—does not bode altogether cheerful.

Conglomerates is a collection of eight essays about the implications of this media-multiplexing in such areas as TV news, newspapers, book publishing, the

film industry, and telecommunications. All the contributors—the book began as a lecture series at New York University in 1996—are established media mavens, and their conclusions about the cultural effect of mergermania are, generally, glum.

No surprise: The absolute and global commodification of information can't help but trivialize information as pure commodity; even Adam Smith, Barnouw reminds us, warned against a "government of merchants." No one who has watched the swift decline of TV news will quarrel: for example, the *Today* show, since Bryant Gumbel's departure, has largely degenerated into a happytalk puppet show, which doesn't even bother anymore to run a news summary at the top of its last half-hour. Ditto Hollywood, where the motivation for the next overhyped blockbuster is patently not so much to make a good film as to use the film to pimp for the spinoff theme-park rides and *tchotchkes* on sale at Wal-Mart and Jack in the Box—not to mention the comic books, novelizations, *und so weiter*. The millennial Big Thing, that is, may turn out to be the apocalypse of the bland: not the global village, but the global mall; not the end of Revelation but the end of Pope's *Dunciad*, where universal dullness covers all.

But no picture—properly painted—is unrelievedly bleak; Clio keeps reminding us that she disdains melodrama as much as she does calendars. The saner essays here make the important point that the moguls of the megaconglomerates—the Medici popes of the New Age—have no more idea where things are going than the rest of us do—and are just as, if not more, jittery about it. Periods of great conformity produce high-octane reactions: Neronian Rome gave us Rome's greatest satirists, the Eisenhower fifties gave us Elvis and Burroughs, and the present slough has given us, besides much else, *Conglomerates and the Media*, written by a bunch of smart, antiestablishment folk and published by a press that is most definitely *not* conglomeratized. The very existence of this book qualifies, though it does not belie, its main thrust. □

DeLillo's surrogate believers

Paul Elie

The reviewers of Don DeLillo's eleven novels have called him many things: a "systems novelist," the chief shaman of the "paranoid school of American fiction," a cultural critic who works in the form of the novel. Now he is being called one of the immortals. In the *New York Times Book Review*, Martin Amis, ducking the question about the new book, put DeLillo up where serious readers have placed him for years. "While *Underworld* may or may not be a great novel," Amis wrote, "there is no doubt that it renders DeLillo a great novelist."

No one as far as I know has called DeLillo a religious writer. Nevertheless, religious language, themes, and imagery are thick on the ground in his work. His last few novels directly address the role of faith in contemporary life. In particular, he has dramatized the notion that skeptical moderns look with a kind of gratitude to religious people, who serve as surrogate believers, keeping open the possibility of belief for those who themselves cannot believe.

DeLillo also has described the nature of fiction in religious terms. Fiction requires a kind of belief from the reader and offers a kind of consolation. As DeLillo explained in connection with *Libra* (1988), about the Kennedy assassination: "The novelist can try to leap across the barrier of fact, and the reader is willing to take that leap with him as long as there's a sort of redemptive truth waiting on the other side, a sense that we've arrived at a resolution." For the writer, DeLillo remarked recently, the solitary daily work of crafting fiction can be "a kind of religious fanaticism, with elements of obsession, superstition, and awe."

DeLillo's new novel, *Underworld*, is the best novel you'll have trouble remembering. For 600 pages you feel De-

Book discussed in this essay

Underworld
Don DeLillo

Scribner, \$27.50, 827 pp.

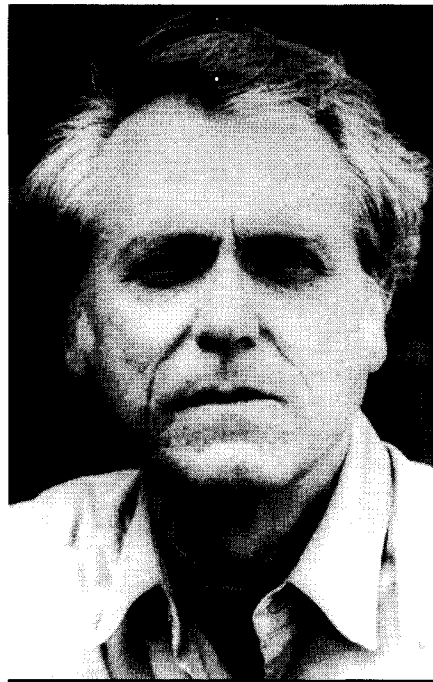
Lillo is taking you somewhere major, even if you don't know where or how. But the novel gets away from the author, and it does so, in part, because he plays fast and loose with the ideas about religion that he has humanized more successfully in earlier books.

DeLillo was born in 1936, grew up in the Bronx, and went to Cardinal Hayes High School and Fordham there. In interviews he regularly brings up his old-school Italian Catholic background. "I think there is a sense of last things in my work that probably comes from a

Catholic childhood," he remarked in 1991. "For a Catholic, nothing is too important to discuss or think about, because he's raised with the idea that he will die any minute now and that if he doesn't live his life in a certain way this death is simply an introduction to an eternity of pain. This removes a hesitation that a writer might otherwise feel when he's approaching important subjects, eternal subjects."

For this reader, the Catholic imprint in DeLillo's work is best discerned in the mystic wonder for the things of the world he expresses in his prose. As Mark Feeney pointed out in *Commonweal* (August 9, 1991), "In all DeLillo's books an almost medieval sense of immanence collides with a clinical delight in the amassing of data." Whereas so many contemporary writers dramatize a lack of meaning or a hunger for meaning, DeLillo sees a superabundance of meaning, and sees the artist's task—the human task—as that of identifying the competing meanings and figuring out how they fit together. For example, in DeLillo's work the suburban supermarket, with its profusion of brightly packaged and test-marketed goods, is not just a wasteland of fruitless diversions, but is a world of signs which, if we can decipher it, can tell us who we are.

In his recent novels, partly as a way to capture that sense of the superabundance of meaning, perhaps, DeLillo has described seemingly mundane aspects of contemporary culture in religious terms. The protagonist of *White Noise* (1984), Jack Gladney, is the chairman of a college department of Hitler studies. He is a kind of priest of the religion of popular culture, "the cults of the famous and the dead." But the works and pomps of popular culture and its attractive diversions cannot allay the more primor-



dial fear of death, so Gladney has to commit a murder to banish it.

In *Libra*, the stand-in for the novelist is Nicholas Branch, who is writing a history of the assassination for the CIA twenty-five years after Kennedy's death. "There is much here that is holy," he cryptically reflects, "an aberration in the heartland of the real." Branch is depicted as a solitary figure "in the great sheltering nave of the Agency." His religion, so to speak, is not conspiracy theorizing but the sifting and ordering of all the data about the assassination. He is a mystic of the facts.

Mao II (1991) is a kind of skeleton key to DeLillo's work in which the art of fiction-making becomes a kind of religion itself. Standing apart from the modern crowd is the reclusive writer Bill Gray, who likens his own shyness to "God's famous reluctance to appear." As Gray sees it, a serious writer is like a terrorist or a religious fanatic in his need to assert his truth against a hostile or indifferent society. In the modern world, however, the writer has yielded his cul-

tural power to headline-catching terrorists, and now he envies them their influence. "Who do we take seriously?" Gray's editor asks him. "Only the lethal believer, the person who kills and dies for faith."

As DeLillo finds religious impulses behind the appearances of contemporary life, he depicts religion itself as a game of appearances. A scene in *White Noise* suggests that it is the pretense of faith, not faith itself, that is the key to understanding the continuing power of religion in the modern world. At the climax of the novel, Jack Gladney shoots and wounds a drug addict named Willie Mink. After giving him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation—in a scene that is a kind of medieval tableau rendered in staccato, end-of-the-century English—Gladney takes him to "a place with a neon cross over the entrance." It is headquarters of a group of German nuns in black habits and heavy shoes. Their mission is "to embody old things." However, they don't possess real faith, they only pretend to. But they see nothing

false in this. Rather, they see the pretense to faith as having a genuine dedication all its own. It too entails a serious life of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The head nun explains:

As belief shrinks from the world, people find it more necessary than ever that *someone* believe. Wild-eyed men in caves. Nuns in black. Monks who do not speak. We are left to believe. . . . Those who have abandoned belief must still believe in us. They are sure that they are right not to believe but they know belief must not fade completely. Hell is when no one believes.

The nuns are DeLillo's surrogate believers, keeping faith on behalf of the human race. This, I think, is a shrewd and uncanny insight into the way we live now. It helps to explain why religion is still so strong a force in our supposedly secular society, and why so many people nominally against religion have failed to eradicate it the way they have claimed they would for centuries now. And it goes a long way toward explaining the psychology of the legions of lapsed Catholics who no longer believe but remain emotionally bound to it.

This need for surrogate believers is apparently a key idea for DeLillo, for he develops it further in *Mao II* and *Underworld*. In *Mao II*, the photographer Britta Nilsson has traveled the world. She has photographed saints' days in Spain, the Day of the Virgin in Mexico City, the Day of Blood in Tehran. "I need these people to believe for me," Britta tells Bill Gray. "I cling to believers. Many, everywhere. Without them, the planet goes cold." Now she photographs only writers, the implication being that writers are the next best thing to true believers—surrogate believers for rational and educated people in the West, making art of the religious impulses we don't dare act on in our own lives.

In his latest novel, *Underworld*, DeLillo measures the effects of the long nuclear standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union. He insists that the cold war, surely the most metaphysical of political confrontations, called forth a parallel "underworld" culture of quasi-

"Jean Elshtain never ducks an issue and is brilliantly provocative—not for the sake of provocation, but because she values moral clarity and intellectual honesty."—E. J. DIONNE, JR., author of *Why Americans Hate Politics* and *They Only Look Dead*

JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN

REAL POLITICS

At the Center of Everyday Life

"A warm, clear voice from the center of our national life. . . .

Whether she is examining the perils of feminist political rhetoric, skewering the philosopher Richard Rorty's terminal sense of irony, or half-admiring Ronald Reagan's eulogy for the space shuttle Challenger crew, Jean Bethke Elshtain shows vividly that America's civic health depends on a tragic sense of life."—JIM SLEEPER, author of *Liberal Racism* and *The Closest of Strangers*

"Her own politics is so clearly marked by humanity, common sense, and theoretical wit that intelligent readers will recognize her as a friend."

—MICHAEL WALZER, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton

\$29.95 hardcover • Available at bookstores or from
THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS

Hampden Station, Baltimore, MD 21211 • 1-800-537-5487 • www.press.jhu.edu

religious ritual and self-expression. "This is the supernatural underside of the cold war," one character remarks. "Miracles and visions." *Underworld* also dramatizes the idea that life during the cold war, life under the constant threat of universal annihilation, engendered a world-spirit in which all people participate by virtue of their common dilemma. "Everything," we are told, "is connected in the end."

The novel's action flows away from its remarkable prologue, set during the 1951 playoff game between the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Giants. All through the game, J. Edgar Hoover, Jackie Gleason, and Frank Sinatra banter back and forth; after the Giants win the pennant on Bobby Thomson's "shot heard round the world," a white businessman and a black teen-ager grapple for the home-run ball. What follows is a kind of "deep inward tunneling" into the seemingly random associations of American culture in search of the American soul.

For about 750 pages, the reader follows the ball—irradiated with the power of the past—as it shows up in the hands of various characters. The narrative rewinds from the present to the 1950s' romance between Nick Shay (now a "waste analyst" who oversees landfills) and housewife Klara Sax (now a conceptual artist who paints decommissioned bombers). At the same time, in a series of long, ambitious set pieces, the novel dramatizes different aspects of the cold-war-era "underworld": arms stockpiling in the Southwest, avant-garde art and film in SoHo, subway graffiti in the South Bronx.

None of the characters in these episodes is all that interesting or memorable. We learn a great deal about them as DeLillo takes us "inside the human works, down to dreams and routine rambling thoughts," in the way of James Joyce. Still, they never really live on the page. DeLillo's own prose style and organizational intelligence are so strong that the characters seem like themes with bodies and surnames.

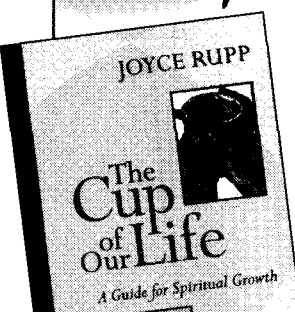
In the past, DeLillo has countered this by devising strong, relentless plots. Not so this time. To tell the truth, in *Under-*

world there isn't much of a story. Rather, the material is organized thematically, with DeLillo relentlessly making the different episodes reprise one another and then piling them up, as in a landfill, or in memory. The "underworld," it is clear, is also the shared past which shapes each of us.

For example, Moonman, a master subway graffiti artist from the 1970s, ded-

icates himself, in the 1990s, to painting a tableau of "angels"—visages of children murdered in the neighborhood—on a bombed-out building in the South Bronx. DeLillo is making a social point through this development, even suggesting the arc of his own writing over the past two decades. Moonman's art of "wildstyle" personal expression, which mirrored the belligerence of the cold

Exceptional Spiritual Reading



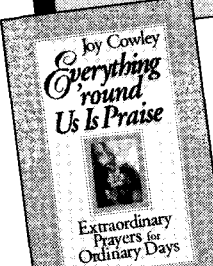
JOYCE RUPP
The Cup of Our Life
A Guide for Spiritual Growth

The Cup of Our Life

Joyce Rupp, OSM

The open cup, the chipped cup, the broken cup, the blessing cup... each image becomes a teacher in prayer. A creative guide for individual and group prayer. Offers six weekly themes based on different images of a cup. The reflective art that accompanies each theme offers yet another inspiration for prayer.

ISBN: 0-87793-625-0 **184 pages, \$11.95**



Joy Cowley
Everything 'round Us Is Praise
Extraordinary Prayers for Ordinary Days

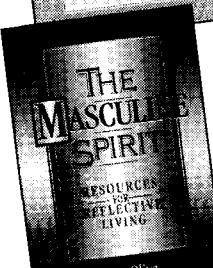
Everything 'round Us Is Praise

Extraordinary Prayers for Ordinary Days
Joy Cowley • Photography by Terry Coles

"Here's a book of prayers you can pray from again and again, and even commit to memory so as to live a fuller life." — Fr. Ed Hays

A collection of prayers that embody lively, everyday spirituality. Cowley's insights, communicated through vivid image and poetic turn of phrase, will remind readers of the many points at which the everyday and the holy are one. Simple black and white photographs are the perfect complement.

ISBN: 0-87793-628-5 **120 pages, \$8.95**



THE MASCULINE SPIRIT
Resources for Reflective Living
Max Oliva

The Masculine Spirit

Resources for Reflective Living
Max Oliva

In this practical book the author combines his experience as a retreat leader with the wisdom gained on his own spiritual journey to help men develop and refine the skill of reflective living. Through the personal stories of thirteen men Oliva shows how every aspect of a man's life provides an opportunity to reflect and grow.

ISBN: 0-87793-630-7 **160 pages, \$8.95**



Set Your Heart Free
The Practical Spirituality of Francis de Sales

A Significant Series Continues . . .
30 Days with a Great Spiritual Teacher



Set Aside Every Fear
Love and Trust in the Spirituality of Catherine of Siena

Set Aside Every Fear

Love and Trust in the Spirituality of Catherine of Siena
ISBN: 0-87793-624-2
216 pages, \$6.95

Set Your Heart Free

The Practical Spirituality of Francis de Sales
ISBN: 0-87793-627-7
216 pages, \$6.95

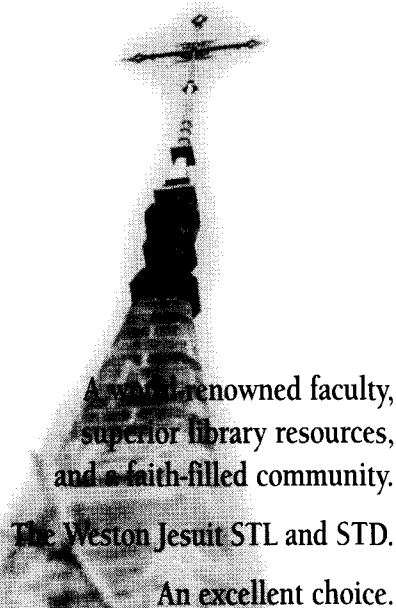
Order from your local religious bookstore or from:

AVE MARIA PRESS NOTRE DAME, INDIANA 46556

PHONE: 1-800-282-1865, EXT. 111 • FAX: 1-800-282-5681

In Canada: Order from your local bookstore or B. Broughton Co., Ltd.
2105 Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON M4C 1K1

Licentiate and Doctorate in Sacred Theology



A world renowned faculty,
superior library resources,
and a faith-filled community.

The Weston Jesuit STL and STD.

An excellent choice.

Biblical Studies

Richard J. Clifford, SJ
Daniel J. Harrington, SJ
John S. Kselman, SS
Stanley B. Marrow, SJ

Church History

Francine J. Cardman
Janice S. Farnham, RJM
John W. O'Malley, SJ

Moral Theology

James F. Keenan, SJ
Thomas Massaro, SJ
Edward V. Vacek, SJ

Historical and Systematic Theology

Khaled Anatolios
Kevin Burke, SJ
Peter E. Fink, SJ
Roger D. Haight, SJ
Brian O. McDermott, SJ
J. Randall Sachs, SJ

Pastoral Theology

Katherine M. Clarke
Margaret Eletta
Guider, OSF
Thomas A. Kane, CSP

WESTON JESUIT

School of Theology

A Course of Action

For information please write or call:

Mary Pat St. Jean

Director of Admissions

Weston Jesuit School of Theology

3 Phillips Place, Dept. W1

Cambridge, MA 02138-3495

Telephone (617) 492-1960

Fax (617) 492-5833

war, is now an art of public consolation.

In the neighborhood, Moonman meets Shay's old grammar-school teacher, Sister Edgar, who now performs works of mercy on the streets. Edgar is the character who must bear the heaviest burden of symbolism in the novel. She is called Edgar for no reason other than that the name makes her the symbolic "sister" to J. Edgar Hoover. Although her religious order has gone modern, she still wears "the old things with the arcane names, the wimple, cincture, and guimpe"—again, for no reason other than to represent "the old rugged faith," the ideological twin to cold-war paranoia.

Dressing her up in the old garb also makes it possible—crucially—for DeLillo to have strangers recognize Edgar as a nun at the end of the book. A crowd has gathered, and they believe they have seen a miracle: a vision of a murdered girl flashing on a billboard. Seeing the nun nearby, they spontaneously embrace her. Skeptical at first, Sister Edgar comes to feel as if she has seen the miracle, too. "Everything feels near at hand, breaking upon her, sadness and loss and glory and an old mother's bleak pity and a force at some deep level of lament that makes her feel inseparable from the shakers and the mourners."

No less than the German nuns in *White Noise*, Sister Edgar is a surrogate believer, whose visible presence and apparent faith are meant to reassure the faint of heart and keep the planet from going "cold." However, whereas the nuns in *White Noise* appeared as walk-ons in a satire, Sister Edgar is a character in a realistic novel. Whereas they frankly introduced themselves as symbols, DeLillo wants us to take this walking symbol as a complicated human being.

What's more, we are asked to identify with Sister Edgar at the climax of the novel. After 800 pages, it is as if DeLillo needs some kind of miracle to bring the novel to a satisfactory end. Making Sister Edgar see a miracle, DeLillo wants the reader, as it were, to see a miracle as well. She believes, so we are to believe with her.

But it doesn't work. The fictional ma-

chinery creaks and groans: long sentences, stretched metaphors, hushed incantation, all straining for significance. DeLillo, so good at explaining the world, goes on to explain *Underworld* and the way he wants it to be read, manipulating the reader from behind Sister Edgar's habit. Whereas in classical drama the *deus ex machina* was flown in from above, in *Underworld* the divine contraption that will save the day is brought in from below.

So it is that *Underworld*, DeLillo's most exhaustive novel and in many ways his most hopeful, is also the one that offers the least consolation. Everything is connected in the end, yes, but the connections don't emerge from the world we live in or the one depicted in the novel. They exist in the pattern the author has self-consciously elaborated.

Let me explain in DeLillo's own terms. The trick of fiction, I think, is to make a complex premeditated plan seem surprising and inevitable, to find a pattern on the page that somehow resembles the patterns in the world outside the window or those inside our heads. To do this, the novelist, like the terrorist, must in some ways conceal his plan.

In *Underworld*, though, the plan is out in the open. Plan and pattern are the whole point of the book. It is as if DeLillo is saying to the reader, "Everything is connected in the end—watch me make the connections better than anybody, and leap into the ranks of the great novelists." But his exertions get in the way of the realistic materials he is using to build his book. Where DeLillo seems to want us to share his awe in the face of contemporary life, we are distracted by his striving to create an awesome work. In the end, the reader—at least this reader—feels the lack not only of the redemptive truth DeLillo's art has promised, but of interesting characters, a strong story, a whole and radiant design: all the homely things of fiction by which the novelist elicits the reader's belief, the writer being, in the end, not a priest or a mystic or a fanatic, but only a novelist. □

Paul Elie is a regular contributor to *Commonweal*.

BITE YOUR TONGUE, JANE

Jane Austen

A Life

David Nokes

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, \$35, 578 pp.

Suzanne Keen

David Nokes sets out to debunk the "pictures of perfection" promulgated by Jane Austen's relatives, particularly her sister Cassandra, after Jane's death. Poor Cassandra—she would have writhed at the publicity she has attracted to herself for loving her sister! Nokes expresses instead a disapproval not uncommon in biographers thwarted by relatives of writers: "Cassandra contrived to turn the house into a kind of shrine to her dead sister. She carefully preserved every scrap of manuscript which might do honor to dear Jane's memory, while burning anything that might tend to suggest a less perfect picture. She copied out Jane's prayers but destroyed her most malicious letters." We have the juvenilia, *Lady Susan*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Emma*, *Persuasion*, and a section of *Sanditon*, but what are we to do without the most malicious letters? Sufficient scraps of wickedness survive for Nokes to succeed in depicting a Jane Austen who could have plausibly written Jane Austen's novels, and that's a significant accomplishment. But if a reader of these novels can't catch the note of malice unassisted by private letters to her sister, then I despair of novel-readers altogether!

In fact, Cassandra's destruction of so much of the evidence of the private Jane Austen's nasty side does not entirely conceal it, as Nokes's biography demonstrates. Rude remarks, dismissive descriptions, and sneers have survived. Despite Nokes's efforts to make the Victorian generation of nieces and nephews

who remembered Aunt Jane seem unreliable, the nice, kind person they recalled seems pretty plausible. But if he has not succeeded in entirely replacing the angelic Aunt Jane with her wicked double, Nokes has recreated with exemplary flair the familial and cultural context of Austen's life. It is a rare experience to feel disappointed when the biographer dispenses with the ancestors and arrives at the birth of his subject, but that's how I felt when Nokes left behind the drug-and-gem smugglers, the Indian adventurers, the savage adherents to primogeniture, as well as those kinder, drabber ancestors left to cope with the consequences of their relations' decisions and misadventures. Luckily for a reader craving characters and incident, several brilliantly drawn female relations—an embarrassing kleptomaniac aunt; and the illegitimate daughter of Warren Hastings—stay on the stage for another generation.

Nokes needs this diverse cast of family and friends to make a substantial biography out of a pretty patchy set of documents. Indeed, as he sometimes in frustration admits, Cassandra has entirely obscured whole years of her sister's life from our view! Having adopted from the start a frankly novelistic technique (converting quotations from letters into "thoughts" in characters' minds), he has left himself room for a little speculation about what Jane might have been up to, but he scrupulously flags the sometimes meager facts. No reader will be misled, and the novelistic approach to his material adds some drama to the telling. For instance, when Aunt Leigh-Perrot is imprisoned and tried for stealing lace (a character defense based on the lady's status wins the day), Nokes tells the tale without benefit of hindsight. We know only how Jane and Cassandra and other relations reacted at that time. Only later, when the same lady gets into further trouble for snitching greenhouse plants, does Nokes let on that her own family mem-

bers privately fret that Aunt Leigh-Perrot might have been guilty of the lace theft.

Potential reader, let me not lead you astray with this sensational example. Most of Jane Austen's life is extremely boring! Her writing career as a published author, who earns money for her work, occupies a small slice of the biography. When she finally gets *First Impressions* out of the drawer, dusts it off, renames it *Pride and Prejudice*, and (following on the success of *Sense and Sensibility*) publishes it, the reader heaves a sigh of relief, and not only because it means a paycheck. The money matters: one of the best things in Nokes's *Life* is his catching the unwavering note of anxiety about fortunes, bequests, investments, and promises to support dependent relatives. The sensible marriage of the pragmatic Charlotte Lucas to odious Mr. Collins in *Pride and Prejudice* can be read as a normal response to this inescapable financial pressure; the awarding of real love and the richest catch in the story to the smart-mouthed, independent-minded Elizabeth Bennet (who has, like her maker, refused proposals) represents with full force the wish-fulfilling fantasy of Austen's fiction. Nokes shows very clearly how Austen works out happy endings for her protagonists, while avoiding the consequences of a merely sensible marriage (and a succession of pregnancies) for herself. Though not poor, as a dependent female Jane cannot always control where she lives, what she does, in whose company, or for whose reasons. The frustration and anxiety understandingly depress her.

It does seem a little unfair, therefore, when Nokes takes all but the richest of the Austen siblings to task for the abandonment of George Austen, their mentally impaired brother, to a paid caretaker. Admittedly, the life-term served by an evidently uncomprehending George Austen in a remote cottage will strike modern readers as a cruel sentence to be made by parents, especially when it was unmitigated by any signs of sisterly affection. It is hard to imagine, however, what Jane Austen was supposed to do about it. Nokes is right to draw attention to the facts, for they underline

his point that a ruthlessly pragmatic willingness to focus resources where they will do the most good means that every generation has its disappointed hopes, its casualties, and its complement of the embittered.

My only serious complaint about this otherwise engrossing biography is that Nokes's somewhat dismissive treatment of *Mansfield Park* may dissuade readers from tackling one of the canon of not-so-famous-but-still-great works of the nineteenth century. (Other works on this list include George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*, Charles Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend*, Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, and Thomas Hardy's *The Woodlanders*.) Nokes shows that *Mansfield Park* disappointed its contemporary readers, for it wasn't really very much like *Pride and*

Prejudice. Nonetheless, *Mansfield Park* remains an excellent novel, full of the anxieties about money, about the adoption of a single lucky child by a rich relative, and eloquent in its depiction of the discomfiting position of the person who is always on the receiving end of others' generosity. Though she is quiet, pious, averse to playacting, and resolutely unwitty, Fanny Price has a lot of Jane Austen in her. And Nokes's reservations about that, notwithstanding, the darker social analysis and moralistic tone of *Mansfield Park* can be detected on many pages of *Jane Austen: A Life*. □

Suzanne Keen teaches English literature at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia.

of the modern papacy, and one of the merits of this fine book is that Duffy tells this story in great detail. For the nineteenth century is the great turning point in the history of the papacy. From the time of the Merovingian kings in the eighth century the pope was not simply the bishop of Rome and the spiritual leader of the churches of the West, he was also a prince and a monarch ruling a huge territory in Italy. In the minds of the popes and other Christian leaders the spiritual independence of the church was dependent on the pope's temporal power. With the loss of the Papal States the papacy faced an uncertain future.

Saints and Sinners (an unhappy title that I suspect is not Duffy's doing) grew out of a series of television programs for British and Irish television that will also be broadcast on the History Channel in the United States in 1998, and in Canada on TV Ontario and the Knowledge Network beginning this month. Eamon Duffy, a Catholic layman, is Reader in Church History and a fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge, and the author of the acclaimed *Stripping of the Altars*, a study of the English Reformation. This new book offers the most comprehensive one-volume history in English of the popes from ancient times to the pontificate of John Paul II. It is not an original work of interpretation; Duffy's task is to present a balanced and continuous narrative with as much personal and historical detail as possible. This he does admirably with an eye for lively anecdotes and apt quotations. At the same time he is sensitive to conflicting views, and his account is judicious and fair throughout. Only when he comes

UPON THESE ROCKS

Saints and Sinners

A History of the Popes

Eamon Duffy

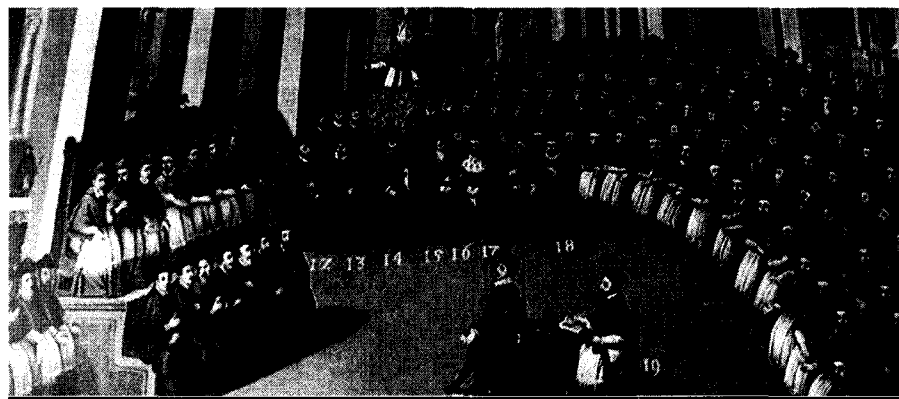
Yale University Press, \$30, 336 pp.

Robert Louis Wilken

In the spring of 1996, when Umberto Bossi's Northern League began to agitate for the separation of northern Italy from the rest of the nation and the formation of an independent state called Padania, the Italian bishops' conference was meeting in Rome. When the news reached them several bishops at once called news conferences to defend the unity of the Italian nation, and later in the week the pope added his voice to theirs. How different things were in the nineteenth century! The popes were militant foes of the revolutionary movement to unite the people of the Italian peninsula in a single state. A unified Italy would certainly mean the dissolution of the Papal States, a vast territory

that included Rome and much of central Italy, and the end of the temporal power of the papacy. This is of course what happened. Even in the early twentieth century, the saintly and pastoral Pius X (1903–14) "detested the Italian state," says Duffy. It was not until Pius XI (1922–39) that a pope opened a window toward Italy and gave the blessing *Urbi et Orbi* from the balcony in Saint Peter's Square.

The loss of the papal states to France at the time of the French Revolution, their restoration at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, and then their absorption into the new republic of Italy in 1869 is the background for any understanding



to the more recent popes, especially Paul VI and John Paul II, about whom opinions are deeply divided, will some readers have reason to quarrel with his judgments.

The book is beautifully produced (though the print is painfully small), and the text is accompanied by 150 magnificent photos, a rich bibliographical essay, glossary, index, and chronological list of the popes. With all this it dismays me to say that in the first line of the preface there is an embarrassing error that escaped the proofreaders. "Nearly 90 million human beings. . . look to the pope as their spiritual leader." I take it Duffy had written 900 million.

The book divides the history of the popes into six large periods. The first, titled "upon this rock," treats the early centuries up to the reign of Leo the Great (d. 461), the first pope to have an almost mystical identification with the person of Peter. The second section, "between two empires," tells the story of the gradual turning of the popes away from the East (after the collapse of the Byzantine Empire in Italy) and the orientation of the papacy to Europe and its kings. In the first thousand years this turning to the West is the single most important development. Until very recent times, the character of the papacy and most of the actions of the popes have been shaped by this Western orientation. The third section, "set above the nations," begins with the the great reforming popes (most of whom were monks) of the Middle Ages, for example, Gregory VII (1037-85), and ends in the decline of the papacy and schism in the early sixteenth century. By that time the popes were definitely not "above the nations," and the next period, "protest and division," begins with an account of the Renaissance papacy (including an insightful discussion of Nicholas [1447-55]) and ends mordantly with the pusillanimous and servile Clement XIV (1769-74). Along the way Duffy includes a full account of the popes during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation.

Fully one-third of the book, the two final sections, is devoted to the last two hundred years. In the period from the French Revolution through Leo XIII, the

struggle of the popes to hold onto the temporal sovereignty of the papacy colored their approach to all other questions. But, argues Duffy, resistance to the new political and intellectual developments (for example, in the Syllabus of Errors) was not simply a matter of nostalgia or intransigence; there were sound reasons for opposition to the new forces. The world that was being born *was* hostile to Christianity, and the European monarchs wanted to run the church and use it for their own ends. Holding onto temporal power was one way to preserve the church's independence. Indeed, there are interesting parallels between opposition by popes in the eleventh century to lay investiture and the defense of papal prerogatives in the nineteenth century. Duffy also shows that the more the church was forced to accommodate to the new political realities, the more the pope assumed new authority within the church itself. When the territory of the Papal States came under the rule of the Italian republic, the new nation surrendered any claim to the appointment of bishops. As a consequence, the pope took over this responsibility, "a move of enormous significance," writes Duffy.

In the twentieth century, the papacy, freed of the burden of temporal power, was reborn. It still had the responsibility of making concordats with the European nations, France, Germany, Italy, and, of course, confronting fascism (Duffy has some good words in defense of Pius XII's efforts on behalf of the Jews) and communism; but what comes through in this account is the pastoral orientation of the popes (beginning with Pius X who held catechism classes in the courtyard of San Damaso every Sunday afternoon), and the renewal of the church's interior life through papal initiative, not only Vatican II, but earlier in the century through reforms in canon law, liturgy, seminary education, and attention to the younger churches, especially under Pius XI. At the accession of Pius XI not one missionary diocese in the Catholic church was led by an indigenous bishop. By 1939 there were forty, and the number of local-born priests had trebled to over 7,000. At the beginning of this century the fortunes of the papacy seemed at an all-time low,

Imagining Peace

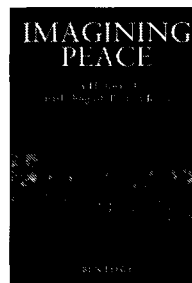
A History of Early English Pacifist Ideas

BEN LOWE

"*Imagining Peace* is a first-rate book. Lowe takes us from the Patristic and Canonist preoccupation with Just War theory to the dominant peace theory under Queen Elizabeth. His writing is always clear, persuasive, current in scholarship, and resourceful in argument."

—Arthur J. Slavin, University of Louisville

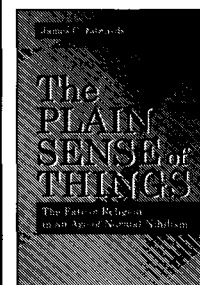
416 pages \$19.95 paper



The Plain Sense of Things

The Fate of Religion in an Age of Normal Nihilism

JAMES C. EDWARDS



"This is a book of wisdom that mines the fading of our past religious convictions to show how they might provide a way to go on in what Edwards wonderfully calls 'normal nihilism.'"

—Stanley Hauerwas, Duke University

262 pages
\$17.95 paper

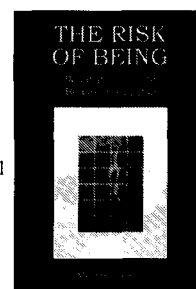
The Risk of Being

What It Means to Be Good and Bad

MICHAEL GELVEN

The Risk of Being attempts to forge a new language and a new way of reasoning about what it is like to be good and bad by focusing on existential phenomena that reveal what it means to be good and bad. In doing so, he offers new and often unorthodox insights into one of the great philosophical issues challenging the thinking mind.

182 pages \$17.95 paper



Available in bookstores or from
Penn State University Press
University Support Bldg. 1, Suite C
University Park, PA 16802-1003
Orders: 1-800-326-9180
FAX: 814-863-1408
<http://www.psu.edu/psupress>

but by the end of the century the pope has a "spiritual status . . . greater than at any time since the high Middle Ages." In large measure Duffy attributes this to the "personality and patent Christian goodness of so many of the recent popes."

If there is an overall theme to Duffy's account of the popes, it is that the "mere existence of the papacy, and even its most self-aggrandizing claims, have again and again helped ensure that the local churches of Christendom retained something of a universal Christian vision, that they did not entirely collapse back into the narrowness of religious nationalism, or become entirely subor-

dated to the will of the powerful secular leaders." Often in the course of the long history of the papacy the popes themselves hardly pointed to such a transcendent vision. Yet, Duffy is surely correct, and it is a measure of his historical imagination and theological astuteness that he would come to that conclusion *after* examining the lives and works of the popes in such detail. □

Robert Louis Wilken is the William R. Kenan, Jr., Professor of the History of Christianity at the University of Virginia. His most recent book is *Remembering the Christian Past* (Wm. B. Eerdmans).

the university," or that "tenure is a necessary condition of academic freedom," to the claim that "teaching is the primary task of higher education," or that "the university is the axial institution of modern society." To each of these he devotes a chapter before turning, in the last two chapters of the book, to "synthetic solutions" to some of the problems raised, and then easing, by way of conclusion, into a statement of educational ideals and a hazarding of predictions about the future.

This choice of a segmented, somewhat episodic, approach brings with it some real advantages. It encourages in O'Brien an easy and admirable pithiness and provides him with a ready-made vehicle for advancing a very broad array of important and quite disparate points, most of which do indeed deserve to be emphasized and driven home. Some of them are points familiar enough to those of us in the business but persistently missed by the public and journalists. They are the sort of point that it is the cruel fate of college presidents to have endlessly to make. That it is necessary, for example, to avoid confusing the *price* charged for a student's education (tuition) with the institutional *cost* incurred in providing it. Public and private institutions of comparable quality incur much the same cost but, courtesy of the taxpayer, the public institution can afford to pass along to the consumer in the form of price/tuition a much lower percentage of that cost.

Other points O'Brien makes concern the sort of thing more often noted and discussed within the academy than without. That contemporary faculty bodies, for example, are far better equipped to veto proposals relating to the overall direction of their institutions than to initiate them. Or again, that the distinction between public and private sectors of higher education is already in a state of advanced erosion, with state funding of the public universities constituting a smallish and steadily dwindling fraction of their overall revenues. And some of O'Brien's points, finally, are ones which certainly deserve to be made, though they would not necessarily command general agreement even with-

THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE

All the Essential Half-Truths about Higher Education

George Dennis O'Brien

The University of Chicago Press, \$19.95, 235 pp.

Francis Oakley

This lively, engaging and richly suggestive book, the fruit of a distinguished career of professorial, deanly, and presidential service at several of the nation's leading colleges and universities, reflects the encounter of a sharp philosophical mind and an irrepressibly contrasuggestible temperament with the gritty realities of life as it is lived in the administrative trenches of American higher education in the late-twentieth century. That encounter, let it be said, is at once both provocative and intriguing.

Arguing that the advent a century ago of the modern research university has had a transformative impact upon the whole enterprise of American higher education, O'Brien emphasizes the "tectonic shift" which occurred when the modern university, dominated by faculty interests, assumed the flagship role once proudly filled by the older, presi-

dentially dominated and religiously inspired colleges. In particular, he focuses on the marked degree of tension generated between the research ethos among our contemporary faculty and the "historical 'hang-over' of moral mission" inherited from the collegiate past and still, willy-nilly, part and parcel of public expectations concerning what a university is all about. Discussion of such matters, he believes, has been vitiated—"anywhere from misplaced to mistaken"—because it has persistently addressed the idea rather than the institution of higher education. It is, therefore, to the realm of institutionalization, the treacherous transit "from absolute ideal to concrete reality," that he directs his attention. And although the strength of the book lies, I would judge, in its theoretical clout, he is at least nudged in the direction of attending to matters of history and tradition.

In pursuit of his exploration of such matters, and as the book's title itself signals, O'Brien sets out to organize his reflections by relating them to a somewhat disparate series of "half-truths" about higher education—not myths or falsehoods, he insists, but "highly valuable and essential" pronouncements that have assumed the status of accepted clichés. Of these he lists eight, ranging from the assertion that "the faculty is

A Preserving Grace

Protestants, Catholics, and Natural Law

Edited by MICHAEL CROMARTIE

A host of questions that surround the notion of natural law are examined and debated by a distinguished group of scholars—RUSSELL HITTINGER, SUSAN SCHREINER, DANIEL WESTBERG, JOAN LOCKWOOD O'DONOVAN, CARL E. BRAATEN, TIMOTHY GEORGE, WILLIAM EDGAR, and ROBERT P. GEORGE. They explore various Protestant and Catholic interpretations of natural law; how natural law relates to theology, philosophy, science, and secular authority; and whether natural law should be preferred to more explicitly religious language in public debates of moral issues. MICHAEL CROMARTIE is senior fellow in Protestant studies and director of the Evangelical Studies Project at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

201 pages ♦ \$20 paper ♦ ISBN 0-8028-4306-9

"Much that divides the Roman from the Reformed and evangelical traditions is related to the issue of 'natural law.' . . . This book plumbs depths of the common heritage and points toward necessary future convergences that are today obscured by polemics. An indispensable resource in a global era."

—MAX L. STACKHOUSE, Princeton Theological Seminary

"These superbly edited exchanges untangle many confusions and inaugurate a powerful conversation."

—MICHAEL NOVAK, American Enterprise Institute

"Some of the best current thinking on the challenges and opportunities involved in the much needed ecumenical renewal of the natural law tradition."

—PHILLIP E. JOHNSON, University of California, Berkeley

ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY CENTER
1015 Fifteenth Street NW ♦ Washington, D.C. 20005
(202)682-1200 ♦ fax (202)408-0632

Please send me *A Preserving Grace*: _____ copies paper, at \$20 each.

\$_____ Cost of book(s)

ISBN 0-8028-4306-9

_____ D.C. residents: add 5.75% sales tax

_____ Postage (\$2 first copy, 50¢ each add'l)

☐ I have enclosed \$_____.

\$_____ TOTAL

☐ Bill my ☐ VISA or ☐ MasterCard account.

NAME _____

CARD NUMBER _____

EXPIRES _____

STREET _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

SIGNATURE _____

ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY CENTER
1015 Fifteenth Street NW, #900 ♦ Washington, D.C. 20005 ♦ 202/682-1200 ♦ fax 202/408-0632

in the academy. That university faculty, for example, are oddly but characteristically uninterested in and ignorant about "the history and structure of the very institutions in which they live and have their academic being (thus, more professorial monographs on Shiloh than on Siwash)."

And so on. All of this is very much to the good. It has to be noted, however, that O'Brien's segmented "half-truths" approach also brings with it some disadvantages. I sense, for example, that the episodic nature of that approach encourages in him a certain breeziness of rhetorical formulation ("Distribution requirements have replaced beanies: the academic equivalent of freshman hazing"), as well as a somewhat regrettably undisciplined weakness for alliteration (curricular concentration, cohorting, continuity, connection, commitment, conversation) that serves less to catch one's attention than to divert it from the seriousness, let alone the density, direction, and destination of his discourse! It may also help explain the genial dishevelment with which he advances generalizations that are essentially empirical in nature. When David Breneman (whose authority O'Brien invokes) analyzed the curricular practices of American liberal arts colleges, the standard Carnegie listings indicated that there were fewer than 600 such colleges in the country, not the "near a thousand" that O'Brien casually mentions. Nor did Breneman's analysis quite suggest that "very few actually practice the curricula of their claims." Instead (and more precisely), it suggested the desirability of reclassifying some three hundred of them as "comprehensive colleges" partly on the grounds that less than 40 percent of their students were graduating with degrees in liberal arts subjects.

Somewhat more worryingly, the episodic way in which O'Brien organizes his book strikes me as an impediment to the delivery of his most important and compelling message. That message concerns the moral mission of the university and, institutional and historical preoccupations notwithstanding, it is fundamentally philosophical in nature. Having rightly stressed the

continuing tension between the dominant research ethos and the subdominant and residual commitment to the moral formation of students, he goes on correctly to insist that the modern research university simply "cannot escape certain inner 'moral' structures and clues both positive and negative." Not least among these are "the moral implications" stemming from its "mission 'to discover truth.'" And O'Brien goes on to probe, in stimulating and illuminating fashion, the neuralgic moments embedded in that recognition. That his statement of the problem is clearer than his exploration of its res-

olution is only to be expected. The issues involved are exceedingly intricate and tantalizingly subtle ones. But lurking in his abbreviated reflections on those issues here is the promise of a fuller treatment and the shadowy outline of a badly needed, timely, and much more sharply focused book. He should not hesitate to write it. □

Francis Oakley is Edward Dorr Griffin Professor of the History of Ideas at Williams College and president emeritus of the college. His most recent books are *Omnipotence, Covenant and Order* and *Community of Learning: The American College and the Liberal Arts Tradition*.

ROMANTIC FROM THE START

The Mad Dog Stories

Heinrich Böll, translated by Breon Mitchell

St. Martin's Press, \$19.95, 176 pp.

Joseph Hynes

In 1985, the year of his death, Heinrich Böll completed his last novel, *Women in a River Landscape*. Since that time, some of his earlier, unpublished works have been made available from the Böll Archives in Cologne. These posthumous pieces include the short novels *A Soldier's Legacy* and *The Silent Angel*. To this list we may now add the ten items that comprise *The Mad Dog*, including short stories and a few isolated fictional episodes derived from typescripts in various stages of completeness. Parts of two or three of these pieces were incorporated into other Böll works. Editorial research dates one story 1936–37 and the other items from 1946 to perhaps 1950.

In my opinion the 1936–37 story, "Youth on Fire," will be seen by Böll enthusiasts as worth the price of admission, despite the virtues of the other

stories. Here we have Böll, only nineteen years old, before the war that fed so much of his artistic energy, laying before us, with almost none of his subsequent irony and satire, that spiritual, sexual, and cultural idealism we know from the harsher, stylistically sophisticated writing that earned him the Nobel Prize in 1972 for *Group Portrait with Lady*.

"Youth on Fire," perhaps the earliest Böll fiction extant, comes out of a Germany in deep economic depression, precisely when National Socialism was gaining its sinister foothold. The young people of the title include three couples and a priest, all of whom experience the personal and social evil in which they are immersed, but who nonetheless resist suicide, despair, crime, and cynicism because they love God and believe ardently in the reality and power of God's grace. The only group they want to belong to is the church, within whose embrace six of them expect to marry, work, and live in hope. Indirectly, of course, these people reject the military, economic, political solutions in the German air, and put their faith in the supernatural and in their fellowship. The translator mentions the young Böll's debt—in this whole collection—to Erich Maria Remarque's social realism. This is a valid observation, especially with respect to

both men's war stories, but at least in "Youth on Fire" I detect the French influence of Bernanos, Bloy, Péguy, and Mauriac, the Catholic novel's heavy hitters of the early twentieth century.

The idealized Catholic Christian collectivism of this story shows up later, after it has gone institutionally rancid, in *The Clown* and *Group Portrait*. "Youth on Fire," however, is the young Böll's nonironic, almost Edenic, expression of loyalty to his Catholic roots. More specifically, his idealism turns up here as always in his presentation of sexual love as idealistically romantic—the genuine article from the first glance and forever. Such love overcomes any sordidness or other experience that occurred before the beloved is first glimpsed, and reminds one of medieval courtly love: consummation is fine, but somehow a little beside the point of love's permanence and emotional (not intellectual) force. Indeed, one wonders, after reading "Youth on Fire" and later books like *The Clown*, *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*, *The Safety Net*, and *Group Portrait*, how Böll accounted for attraction between plain, ordinary, lean, or lumpy folks. Romanticism—in the midst of vivid social realism—always ruled him. In any event, "Youth on Fire" will show many readers the Böll of nineteen still driving the Böll of fifty or sixty. It's an important document and a good story.

The later pieces are war-centered, each tending to focus on a single character. "America," "The Tribe of Esau," and "The Dead No Longer Obey" are snippets put aside in the 1940s. Böll had quit college soon after the war and was struggling as a writer to support his growing family. To that end, he produced these unattached tidbits and stories, as well as some novellas, none of which, in their stress on war and wretchedness, proved publishable.

Among the unpublished stories was "The Fugitive." Joseph, the title figure, is fleeing his fellow German soldiers for "a crime against the state." He is finally shot dead, but the story appears to be concerned not so much with this outcome as with Joseph's hatred for war and for how it affects participants. Fore-shadowing later protagonists, Joseph

It's Your Call



A MASTER OF DIVINITY DEGREE

at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley

- A place to explore intellectually
- A community of adult students excited about theology
- Hundreds of courses to choose from in an ecumenical setting
- Integration of study, spirituality and experience

CALL us at 1-800-824-0122 or 510-841-8804 or WRITE for information to:

Director of Admissions

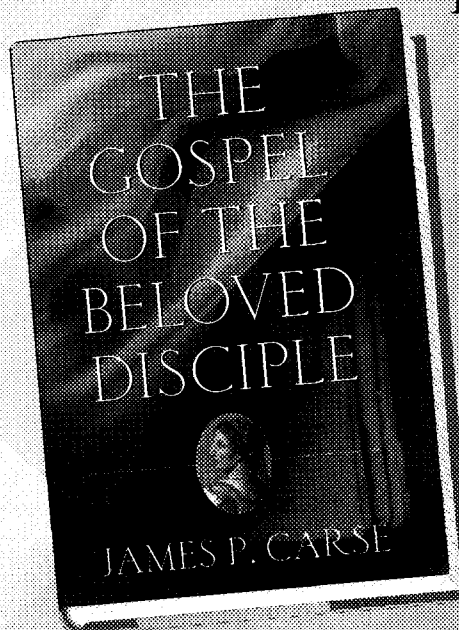
Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley

1735 LeRoy Avenue • Berkeley, California 94709-1193

FAX: 510-841-8536 • EMAIL: Admissions@JSTB.edu

"A Beguilingly Beautiful, Hauntingly Evocative Gospel"

—JOHN DOMINIC CROSSAN,
author of *The Historical Jesus*



HarperSanFrancisco
A Division of HarperCollins Publishers

Legendary religion professor James P. Carse presents the first complete, original gospel since the fourth century: *The Gospel of the Beloved Disciple*.

"Carse has created a new gospel that breathes fresh life into the Jesus tradition.

—ROBERT W. FUNK, author of *Honest to Jesus* and director of the Jesus Seminar

confronts a safe and comfortable priest with whom he exchanges blessings he feels they both need. Joseph's fear is wonderfully conveyed, as is his savoring of the bread, coffee, and tobacco that typically sustain Böll's characters.

"Trapped in Paris" is the tale of another fugitive—Reinhard, a solitary German soldier running from American forces seizing Paris. Reinhard, for whom war is hateful because it keeps him from his beloved wife, to whom he has remained faithful, hides in the house of an

unnamed woman equally faithful to her soldier-husband. The brief, intense, erotic encounter between these two is shown as the work of fate, circumstances, and their near-despair; yet as Reinhard continues his flight she says that he must not "be sad. The three who love us: God, your wife, and my husband, may well forgive us." Thus the idealism and faith of "Youth on Fire" persist ten years later.

Like "Trapped in Paris," "The Rendezvous" explores sexual need as distinct from love. In a setting that evokes

Greene's *Third Man* and the cigarette butts, trash heaps, rain, and fog of Eliot's poetry, a married doctor and a woman he has picked up at a movie meet again, have a drink, consummate their passion as fatefully as do Reinhard and the Frenchwoman, and consent to release each other. The seediness of the setting matches the morality on view. These characters despise their need for sex, but fate controls them if only for an afternoon.

"Paradise Lost," possibly the opening chapter of an unfinished novel, explores then and now, dream and reality. An unnamed soldier returns after seven years of war to claim Maria, with whom he had consummated his love before going to battle. As in "The Rendezvous," atmosphere is important. The house now looks like a Faulkner manse half a century after the Civil War, and the hallway stinks of fish, onions, and fried potatoes. As he waits for Maria, the soldier comes to realize—even before he meets her new husband—that illusion has crippled him, that life has inevitably gone on, and that he has lost her. He is right on all counts: illusion can sustain one for a while, but it can also crush one.

Another idealist, the unnamed engineering officer in "The Tale of Berkova Bridge," also loses, but a bit more ambivalently. As we call to mind events on the River Kwai, he dutifully rebuilds a bridge—destroyed by fleeing Russians in 1941—to enable his German troops to escape the Russians in 1943. Militarily, he allows another dutiful officer to blow up that bridge and to leave the Germans to be slaughtered by pursuing Russians, for the chased must provide no convenience for the pursuers. The story neatly delivers Böll's permanent conviction that war is immoral idiocy, and delivers it with telling irony.

Finally, "Mad Dog" skillfully builds a story within a story, in Conrad's fashion. An anonymous doctor officially pronounces that a body at the police station is dead. An attendant chaplain then takes over to tell the doctor about Theodor Herold, the deceased. Herold, a brilliant, abused orphan, grew to young Catholic manhood with only one friend, named Becker, who became a priest. Herold's

BOSTON COLLEGE



- DISCOVER BOSTON AND HISTORIC NEW ENGLAND
- FLEXIBLE PROGRAM OPTIONS FOR STUDY
- ENRICHING LITURGICAL AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES
- CONTINUING EDUCATION, LEADERSHIP AND LITURGY CERTIFICATES
- M.A., M.A./M.S.W., M.A./M.A. COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY, M.Ed., C.A.E.S. AND Ph.D. IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
- GENEROUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND GRADUATE STUDENT HOUSING

Boston College

For information, contact:

Institute of Religious Education
and Pastoral Ministry
Department R
Chestnut Hill, MA 02167
800-487-1167 or 617-552-8440
e-mail: irepm@bc.edu
http://www.bc.edu/irepm.html

SUMMER 1998

The "Institute" at Boston College: A place where the church does its thinking.

SESSION ONE: June 29-July 10

Karen Barta
Bernard Cooke
Michael Horan
Margaret Kelleher
Stephen Pope
Michael St. Clair

Introduction to New Testament
Ancient and Contemporary Christologies
Mentoring Youth for Tomorrow's Church
Liturgical Theology
Christian Social Ethics
Counseling Families in a Time of Change

One-Week Conference

Bernard Cooke
James Empereur
Colleen Griffith
Margaret Kelleher
Bruce Morrill

Liturgy and the Body
Credit or Continuing Education
(July 6-10)

SESSION TWO: July 13-July 24

Patricia H. Baumer
& Fred Baumer
Cheryl Exum
Colleen Griffith
Thomas Groome

Lectionary Based Liturgical Preaching
Women and the Bible
Theology, Spirituality, and the Body
Sharing Faith in Religious Education
and Pastoral Ministry
The Church as an Institution in
American Society

Michael Himes
& Kenneth Himes

One-Week Conference

Maryanne Confoy

Educating and Ministering through
Life Passages: Credit or Continuing Education
• Educating and Ministering for Life Long
Learning (July 13-17)
• Faithfulness through Ages and Stages
(July 20-24) (non-conference)

SESSION THREE: July 27-August 7

Shawn Copeland
Claire Lowery
John McDargh
Jane Regan
Robert VerEecke

Foundations in Theology
Theology and Pastoral Practice
Pastoral Counseling and Spirituality
Toward Forming an Adult Church
Sacred and Liturgical Dance Study Program:
Dance: An Invitation to the Sacred
(two-week course)
Liturgical Dance: Form and Content
(two-week workshop)
Embracing Love and Work: Toward a
Spirituality for Living in the World

Evelyn Whitehead
& James Whitehead

ambition and ability took him into the SS ranks, where he advanced rapidly and lost his faith. Becker disapprovingly separated himself from Herold, though the chaplain emphasizes that Becker was the only person this chaste murderer had loved. Following the war, Herold applied his SS leadership to a gang of killers who have now killed him. The chaplain's narrative persuades us, of course, that he is Becker and that he feels the horrible guilt of betraying Herold by judging rather than befriending him and offering him hope.

The story adroitly gives us Böll's idea of what unqualified Christian love should be and of why Catholic institutional behavior almost inevitably betrays that ideal. These views are obviously developed at length in his later novels. I find fascinating these early traces of Böll's subsequent fullblown achievement; but the present tales and fragments are also a useful introduction to a major writer's blend of anger, love, and hope. □

Joseph Hynes teaches English at the University of Oregon.

of contemporary civil misdeeds.

The book's sequences—"To the High Court of Parliament," "Dark-Land," "Mysticism and Democracy," and "Parentalia"—are broken up and scattered throughout the volume, interleaved with isolated lyrics in a minor key. "It is said Adonai your hidden word / declares itself / even from obscurity," Hill writes in the opening lines of "A Song of Degrees." The words take on a credo-like resonance: what is revealed of the Word must be puzzled over in the dark glass of words. For the late poet and critic Donald Davie, Hill was "a writer so desperately aware of the duplicity of language—perhaps of all language, certainly of British English—that he would elevate opacity as the highest virtue and prime duty of all responsible writing." Hill's quarrel with language helps to explain the famous recalcitrance of his poems, as well as their mastery of ambiguity. Slyly deployed, words often assume double and triple duty, as in the clause "We suffer commonly,..." where "common" suggests "usual," "communal," and "base" by turns. In a line that can support three disparate readings, exact meaning becomes hard to pinpoint.

Such is the "slither-frisk" of language in a fallen world. For Hill, the loss of innocence occasioned by this century's atrocities, and by the Holocaust in particular, becomes an antitype of the Fall of Man. Hill describes recent horrors unflinchingly, as in the book's title poem: "Now it is / Moloch his ovens / and the dropped babes naked / swung by an arm / or a leg like flails."

Moloch, Asheroth, Baal—these are among the demons and false idols

THE POET'S DUTY OF OPACITY

Canaan

Geoffrey Hill

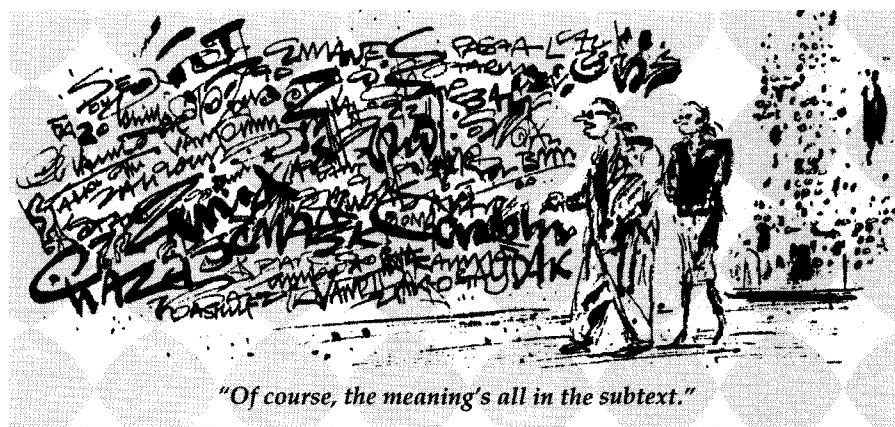
Houghton Mifflin, \$22, 76 pp.

David Yezzi

In *Canaan*, the British poet Geoffrey Hill returns with characteristic sobriety to a number of perennial Christian themes: morality, faith, innocence, redemption, and the struggle against evil. Readers should expect little succor, however, from Hill's tortured and tortuous new volume of poems (the first in over ten years from the Boston University professor). While a growing critical consensus would rank Hill among the greatest living poets in the language, he is also widely considered one of the most difficult, in both subject matter and style. Yet despite the cautions inherent in Hill's obscurity and arcane allusiveness, attention to *Canaan's* terse, knotted lyrics is amply, if dolorously, rewarded. In an age of broadening secularity, Hill's is that rare achievement—a profoundly religious poetry.

A biblical epigraph sets the collection's dire tone: "So ye children of Israel did wickedly in the sight of the Lord, & forgate the Lord their God, & served Baalim, and Asheroth [. . .] O Canaan,

the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee without an inhabitant." Hill borrows something of the severe tenor and cadence of prophecy for his own poetry, weighing the promise of England, and by extension all of Europe, with that ancient Promised Land of the Israelites: "Where's probity in this— / the slither-frisk / to lordship of a kind / as rats to a bird-table?" Continuing in a dark register, Hill commemorates, among other transgressions, graft-taking by British parliamentarians, as England's "wounds weep / into the lens of oblivion." His disgust and condemnatory ire suggest a twentieth-century Svanarola in rare form (though Hill has turned such opprobrium on himself with equal force). While the poet Rosanna Warren rightly suggests that Hill's poetry appears "tormented by Christian theology," here it is placed on the rack



haunting Hill's vision of history. As a measure of the persistence of his themes, it should be remembered that Hill began his first book, *For the Unfallen* (1958), with "Genesis," written when he was nineteen, in which he cautions, "There

is no bloodless myth will hold." His broodings on the past have ranged from Anglo-Catholic Christianity to medieval King Offa's reign, and from the Wars of the Roses to World War II. From his first melancholy lines, Hill has remained

bloody, bold, and staunchly irresolute when it comes to trusting in language's power to carry the necessary burdens. "A poet's words," he has claimed, "are not his utterance so much as his resistance."

Hill dedicates the eight-part "*De Jure Belli ac Pacis*" ("On the Law of War and Peace," taken from the Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius) to Hans-Bernd von Haeften, a conspirator in the plot to overthrow Hitler in July 1944. The poem recounts the Christian lawyer von Haeften's execution against the backdrop of a Europe in ruins. "Evil is not good's absence but gravity's / everlasting bedrock," the poem avers, characterizing evil not as it is often construed—as privation—but as a brute fact and self-sustaining force. We leave these poems, not heartened, but chastened.

Hill's pathfinding over the roughest of history's moral terrain rarely discovers the simple way. To do so would belie the complexity of his concerns ("the truth is difficult to follow," he reminds us). Even Hill's familiar prosodic forms, his previous sonnets and pentameters, here assume the aspect of tortuous, switchback trails along jagged half-lines barely punctuated—a warning, lest we'd missed it, that redemption's ascent exacts its price. Hill so thoroughly mistrusts art's ability to get at truth, it's as if he prefers his poems to be read for their white-hot phrases rather than as seamless wholes. Each rift, however, has been loaded with the terrible, perfect word and an allusiveness.

The obstacles posed by Hill's poetry—the fact that it yields its riches only to patient readings and re-readings—have caused much grumbling among critics. Devoted readers of poetry, however, often think nothing of considering a poet over many years, arriving with each pass at a deeper appreciation. Given the myriad and somber rewards of Hill's art, one would be hard pressed to discover a contemporary poet who deserves our attention more. □

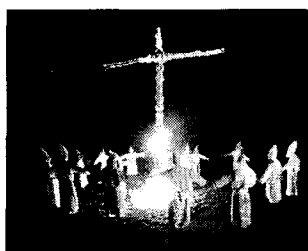
David Yezzi's poems and reviews are forthcoming from *The Paris Review*, *Parnassus*, *Boston Review*, and other magazines. He is the associate editor of *The New Criterion*.

The Graduate Program in Ministry at the University of Notre Dame

The Master of Divinity program at Notre Dame is a three-year, academic and professional course of study designed to prepare students for effective ministry in the Roman Catholic Church. Students include those preparing for ordained ministry and those who wish to serve the church as lay ministers in placements such as hospital chaplaincy, campus ministry, parish ministry and education. In addition to theological studies with a distinguished faculty, the M.Div. program includes field education, pastoral skills courses, homiletics and religious formation.

All lay ministry students receive full-tuition scholarships.

For more information, please write to:
Director, Master of Divinity Program
Department of Theology
331-A O'Shaughnessy Hall
Notre Dame, Indiana 46556
Phone: (219) 631-5682



©Corbis-Bettmann Archive

"Charles Marsh tells the story of five people who believe that faith directs their lives, even while each takes entirely divergent paths, impacting the course of history in a time of revolutionary change."

—Andrew Young, Former Ambassador to the United Nations

God's Long Summer

Stories of Faith and Civil Rights
Charles Marsh

The turmoil of the civil rights movement reached its peak in Mississippi in the summer of 1964. Charles Marsh revisits that tumultuous summer, when individuals converged in violence and when images of God collided in conflict. He combines groundbreaking historical research and in-depth interviews with participants across a wide spectrum, from a Ku Klux Klan leader to a white Baptist pastor to a militant black organizer. He is especially interested in how these people justified their actions with religious convictions: they all believed that God was on their side.

Cloth \$24.95 ISBN 0-691-02134-1

Princeton University Press

AVAILABLE AT FINE BOOKSTORES OR DIRECTLY FROM THE PUBLISHER: 800-777-4726
VISIT OUR WEBSITE: PUP.PRINCETON.EDU

A PARTY NEEDS IDEAS

**The New Majority
Toward a Popular
Progressive Politics**
*edited by Stanley B. Greenberg
and Theda Skocpol*
Yale University Press, \$30, 333 pp.

Alan Wolfe

Just three years ago, the Republican party was not only proclaiming itself revolutionary, but Democrats were in deep disarray, convinced that, for the next decades, their role would be primarily a defensive one. Both parties, it turns out, were premature in their assessments. As Stanley Greenberg and Theda Skocpol argue in *The New Majority*, the prospects for a Democratic majority are by no means hopeless.

For Skocpol in particular, the key arena of life which preoccupies most Americans, and to which both political parties have had difficulty responding, is the family. And she means this in a down-to-earth and practical way, not as a symbolic conflict over cultural visions. The overwhelming majority of Americans, Skocpol believes, worry about making insufficient incomes to support their children and having insufficient time to raise them. "Family populism," as she calls a program that would speak to their needs, can unite working-class and middle-class Americans in ways not fundamentally dissimilar from the Roosevelt electoral coalition fashioned during the New Deal. From that base could be built a civic vision, a sense of national purpose which would enable Democrats to stand for something more than the collective needs of the interests attracted to the party. Focused on the family, progressives can avoid both the probusiness orientation of New Democrats and the identity politics associated with specif-

ic groups such as women, gays, or African-Americans.

Skocpol, in my opinion, is on the right track. She lays out her strategy in clear, direct prose and manages to avoid sentimental romanticism. Her co-editor Stanley Greenberg, moreover, demonstrates with the use of polling data how broad the appeal of such a progressive "story" would be. It is a shame, then, that the contributors Greenberg and Skocpol assembled for their book so persistently depart from, and occasionally contradict, the sensible advice of the editors. While any edited collection will present a wide variety of viewpoints, too many of the contributors to this collection wind up repeating the tired clichés which got the Democratic party in so much trouble in the first place.

In an age preoccupied with economics, no political platform can ignore the

role government plays in promoting economic growth. To spell out a new progressive vision for the economy, the editors turned to Jeff Faux, president of the Economic Policy Institute in Washington. Faux calls for full employment programs, greater public investment, a social safety net, and steps to empower workers. He warns against a fixation on a balanced budget and reminds his readers that "the vast majority of U. S. families are not winners in today's economy, and they know it." Whether Faux is right or wrong is not the point. The point, rather, is that Faux offers nothing particularly new. Indeed he says as much: "There are no entirely new departures in politics." Tell that to the Republicans who managed to change themselves pretty thoroughly and in the process ended their status as a minority party.

"The need for and value of public investment may seem self-evident to some," writes the historian Alan Brinkley. "But to many others, the idea of public investment has become a pow-

In Search of Divine Reality



*Science as a Source
of Inspiration*

Lothar Schäfer

In this remarkable treatise, Lothar Schäfer shares his conclusions from a lifelong search for evidence—from quantum science—of the existence of a transcendent part of physical reality. He combines disciplinary thought from science, philosophy, religion, including ethics, to address the educated generalist and layman with a profound look at existence.

\$26.00 cloth, 1-55728-458-X
\$18.00 paper, 1-55728-468-7

to order call
1-800-626-0090

ARKANSAS
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS PRESS
McIlroy House ♦ 201 Ozark Avenue ♦ Fayetteville, AR 72701

erful symbol of government waste, inefficiency, and incompetence." Unlike Faux, Brinkley understands that we cannot go back to liberal politics as usual because the voters, for whatever reason, tried that course and found it wanting. One would think the progressive alternative, therefore, would lie, not simply in reiterating rejected programs, but in trying to understand what the public has on its mind.

Yet even Brinkley, one of the most intelligent contributors to this volume,

does not make a serious effort to do so. Speaking of public investment, he suggests that "all the rational arguments in its favor have little effect against the overwhelming popular animus—actively fanned by political figures in both parties—toward any public expenditures, however vital they may be...." Such a perspective is far too patronizing ever to be popular. We the intellectuals are "rational." You the demagogues have an "animus" against what we know to be true. No wonder that liber-

als lost power. Convinced of their superior designs, liberals could not grasp—and evidently still have not grasped—that ordinary people, and the politicians who appeal to them, have perfectly "rational" reasons to think in a different way about government than *they* do.

Of all the issues that divide progressives from the majority of Americans, none has played as major a role as race, as many of the contributors to this book recognize. Citing survey data, the University of Chicago's Michael Dawson points out that "blacks tend to value equality more than liberty, whereas for whites, liberty has priority." I believe that Dawson is correct, but he also fails to understand the dilemma that results from this finding. Most white Americans have turned their backs on the idea that active governmental programs can promote equality. So long as black Americans link their fates with the fate of government, white Americans tend to repudiate them, not only because of racism, but also out of a distrust of liberalism. The solution, it would seem, would be for African-Americans to find ways to articulate their interests without identifying themselves so closely with an increasingly repudiated tradition.

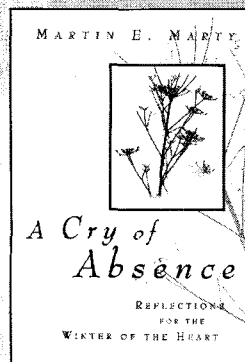
But Dawson urges the opposite step. "In this period of economic change, progressives must seriously agitate for an inclusive, job-centered economic program; a vigorous education program to revitalize the public education system throughout the country; and the type of strong health-care and child-care systems that allow adults to work while children thrive." All good ideas, I would say, yet nothing new—and a great deal unpopular—about all of it.

Not all the essays in *The New Majority* are given over to reasserting traditional liberal pieties. Paul Starr offers a wonderfully refreshing strategy for how the Democrats could "flip the sunbelt" by appealing to Hispanic voters and young voters. "Liberals and progressives seem peculiarly afflicted by what might be thought of as the perils of high-mindedness," Starr writes. Against a politics of moral purity which, for example, might support a third party, Starr calls for an inclusive Democratic

A CRY OF ABSENCE

Reflections for the Winter of the Heart

Martin E. Marty



For more than a decade people have turned to this book for the way it opens up the ancient book of Psalms to those who experience absence because of death, alienation, or separation. Completely redesigned, this modern spiritual classic, with illustrations by Susan Teumer Marty, is now available with a new preface by the author.

"Generally acknowledged to be the most influential interpreter of religion in the U.S. . . . Marty has written poignant reflections occasioned by his first wife's death from cancer."

— *Time*

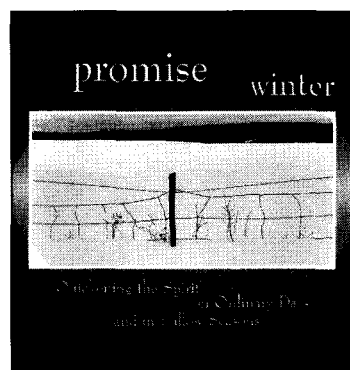
ISBN 0-8028-4328-X • 201 pages • Paperback • \$12.00

THE PROMISE OF WINTER

Quickening the Spirit on Ordinary Days and in Fallow Seasons

REFLECTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Martin Marty and Micah Marty



"Martin Marty's elegant devotional writing and Micah Marty's spare, vivid black-and-white photographs make for stirring meditative reading. . . . Each of the book's meditations on the quiet seasons of life is sandwiched between two Bible verses, and each meditation ends with a short prayer. The reflections and the photographs point to the presence of God even in the midst of the disappointments of everyday life."

— *Publishers Weekly*

ISBN 0-8028-4436-7 • 112 pages • Paperback • \$16.00

At your bookstore,
or call 1-800-253-7521

FAX: 616-459-6540

E-mail: wbesales@eerdmans.com

7554
WM. B. EERDMANS
PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503

party that can co-opt political energy from many places. Starr joins William Julius Wilson, who adds a clear-sighted case for a biracial coalition to attack racial injustice, as penning the best individual chapters in the book.

Janus-like in quality, *The New Majority* is filled with too much boiler-plate rhetoric to carry out its editors' intention to fashion a new progressive platform. But the book also contains enough

nuggets of common sense and sage strategic advice to make it worthwhile. The Democratic party will not be passing from the American political scene for some time. It is refreshing to know that at least some intellectuals, if all too few, are leading rather than following. □

Alan Wolfe teaches sociology at Boston University. His most recent book is *Marginalized in the Middle* (University of Chicago).

STAR TREK

The Whole Shebang

A State of the Universe(s)

Report

Timothy Ferris

Simon and Schuster, \$25, 393 pp.

Nancy M. Haegel

Timothy Ferris has reason to celebrate. A former journalism professor and *Rolling Stone* contributing editor, Ferris covered the Viking landing on Mars in 1976 and published his first popular astronomy book, *The Red Limit*, in 1977. Twenty years later, the nation is fascinated by pictures from Mars Pathfinder, and Ferris's new book, *The Whole Shebang*, is available for those interested in much wider exploration.

Cosmology, from the Greek *kosmos* for orderly, harmonious heavens, is the study of the universe as a whole. This is a book about cosmology, and it begins with a survey of the big bang model, the theory of origin that explains the vast, highly isotropic and expanding universe we observe around us today. The rate of expansion of the universe is described by the Hubble constant (the ratio of the speed at which a galaxy is receding from the earth to its distance from the earth); its measurement and actual value have long been a topic of cosmological controversy, with professional bragging rights, as well as the age and ultimate fate of the universe, on the

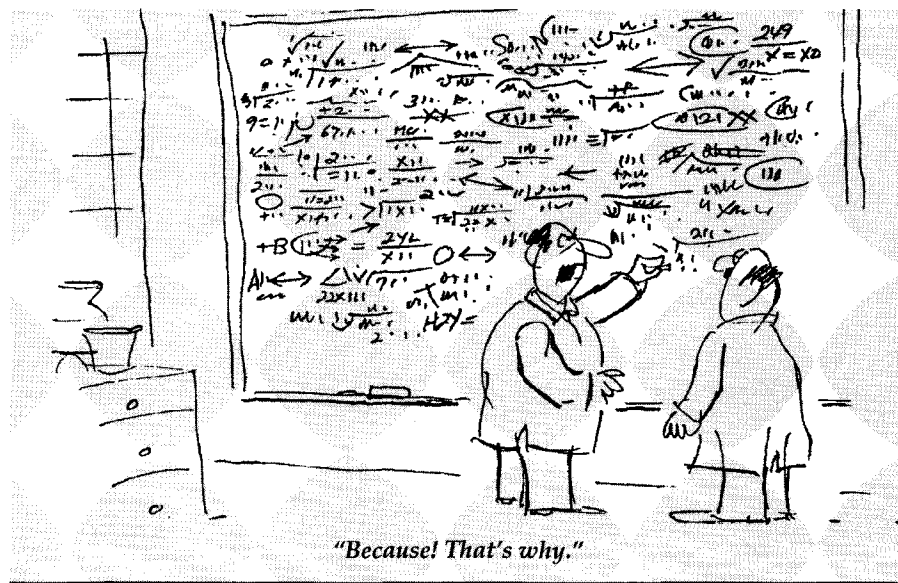
line. Ferris rapidly brings the reader up to date on this debate, followed by reviews of general relativity and nucleosynthesis (the study of the production of the elements). It helps to be at least passingly familiar with some of these now well-established ideas. The details can be overwhelming, and, on occasion, an additional diagram or sketch would have been worth at least a hundred words.

From there, however, the tour moves on to black holes, and Ferris's story hits its stride. Black holes, Ferris writes, are "a kind of mandala for twentieth-century physics, a peerless contemplation object, a meeting ground of general relativity and quantum physics, a triumphant example of how creative theorizing can open windows on the real world." The

creative theorizing to which he refers is the idea that black holes are not as totally unforgiving as once imagined. They are now believed to radiate energy, known as Hawking radiation, in the form of particles which, under the laws of quantum mechanics, have a small, but finite probability of escape. For Stephen Hawking, this insight was beautiful—"It all fitted together so perfectly that it just had to be right...." For Ferris, major significance lies as well in "the fact that it [the theory] unites relativity, thermodynamics, and quantum mechanics, three distinct fields of physics never before combined in a single set of equations."

It is this range of scientific ideas—relativity and quantum mechanics, evolution and cosmology—that makes Ferris's presentation so intriguing. In addressing the big questions, describing phenomena from the smallest (cosmologists now focus on the first 10^{-43} seconds of the Big Bang) to the largest (astronomers now collect light from galaxies billions of light years distant), and seeking connections between diverse fields of scientific thinking, *The Whole Shebang* has a scope that reveals science at its very best.

Science is a story about people as well as ideas—Darwin, Hoyle, Sandage, and Hawking, and newer names that push the limits of astronomy, astrophysics, and particle physics today. The comments of contemporary scientists are interesting, providing a flavor for the



discussion that lies behind the theories. But, happily, there's none of the "scientists are people too" theme that often burdens popular science writing. Timothy Ferris knows and clearly respects many of the people involved in cosmology today. The feeling is mutual, as he has won the admiration of scientists and professional science organizations for his wide-ranging knowledge and simultaneously careful and passionate presentations. The scientific slips that exist are minor, and generally come, as

in the description of relativity, from trying to simplify a bit too much.

The Mars Pathfinder continues to send back amazing pictures of rocks and landscape, things not unfamiliar to those of us on earth. Much of current cosmology research concerns things pictured best and sometimes only by advanced mathematics. Radiating black holes, mysterious dark matter, elusive neutrinos, exotic particles made from strings of space—this is the "stuff" of forefront cosmology. It is already clear

that our universe is more than meets the eye: Estimates are that at least 90 percent of the total mass of the universe remains undetected. Accompanied by selections from "The Dark Matter Rap," an MTV version of cosmology, Ferris reminds us of the shocking notion that, despite thousands of years of observing the skies, "all we have studied to date is but a kind of shadow universe." There is much still to learn, and Ferris allows us to see the impact of relatively recent work. The first observation of structure in the cosmic microwave background, evidence of the seeds of galaxies in the early universe, was announced in 1992, and the now redeemed Hubble space telescope is a fountain of new data. The rate of recent significant breakthroughs is striking. One senses that Ferris's book today will aid in appreciating the *New York Times's* "Science" section of tomorrow.

In the final chapter, titled "Contrarian Theological Afterword," Ferris raises the biggest question: "What about God?" His approach is cautious. He is not given to Hawking's flights of language ("then we would know the mind of God") or to the frankly theological speculations of astrophysicist George Smoot who, to considerable uproar, remarked that in the cosmic background variations one might see "the face of God." Ferris disagrees with those who see cosmology and theology as merging in the face of the ultimate questions about our origin and fate. For Ferris, God is more likely revealed in reflecting on our relationship to one another than in the physical universe.

Timothy Ferris has produced another outstanding book, well worth the effort for both science phobes and science aficionados alike. The wonder engendered by the universe is matched only by the wonder that human beings, arriving so late on the scene, are able to perform the creative and disciplined thinking that allows us to understand it. I gave several copies of *The Whole Shebang* as graduation presents earlier this year, invitations to an enjoyable and stimulating continuing education. □

Nancy Haegel teaches physics at Fairfield University.



LIBRARY OF RELIGIOUS BIOGRAPHY



BLAISE PASCAL

Reasons of the Heart

MARVIN R. O'CONNELL

This biography by Marvin R. O'Connell captures Pascal's life and times with a chronological narrative based on the published sources and Pascal's own works. From Pascal's early life as a child prodigy already experimenting in physics at the age of ten to his adult years as one of Europe's leading intellectuals, O'Connell takes readers on an eloquent journey into Pascal's world, showing them the passion that drove the man and the radical spirituality he sought in his own heart. In the process, O'Connell also illumines the social, political, and religious intrigue of seventeenth-century Paris, especially the winner-take-all struggle between the Jesuits and the Jansenists, with whom Pascal himself was allied.



Meticulously researched yet written in an enjoyable style accessible to all, this volume will aptly acquaint readers with the life and thought of Pascal — remarkable human being, luminous Christian thinker.

"O'Connell creates a context for understanding brilliant mathematician and mystic Blaise Pascal. The physical and intellectual environment of Pascal's 17th-century France come alive in this well-written work."

— *Library Journal*

ISBN 0-8028-0158-7 231 pages Paperback \$16.00

At your bookstore,
or call 1-800-253-7521

FAX: 616-459-6540

E-mail: wbesales@eerdmans.com

7558
WM. B. EERDMANS
PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503

POSTMODERN IS OLD HAT

The End of Art

Arthur Danto

Princeton University Press, \$24.95, 239 pp.

David Castronovo

This book about judging art in the postmodern era is lucidly written and tightly packed with fascinating theory and art history. No hayride, it is nevertheless pleasurable because of the prose itself—smooth and genial in tone. Arthur Danto is a distinguished emeritus philosophy professor at Columbia and a fine communicator in his art criticism for the *Nation*. Yet even engaging writing and unpretentious erudition cannot quite prevent these essays from being slippery journeys to the author's favorite but highly unsatisfactory destination—our own post-1960s' art world and its dizzying array of styles. Danto is an expert guide through the polemical terrain that surrounds pop art, transgressive art, conceptual installations, readymades, and ideological pictures and displays. He covers everything from controversies about your basic Andy Warhol Brillo box of the 1960s to issues about museums as elitist preserves to ideas about the fist-shaking feminist art of the 1990s. But don't look for any discussion of how artistic tradition can endure.

Danto offers a manifesto of sorts, although he has negative things to say about traditionalists' and modernists' manifestos. His central argument is that since the mid-1960s art has parted company with the great modernist project of purifying painting and sculpture. That project once included making painting expressive of feelings, as well as valorizing paint and stone rather than themes and subjects. Artists attempted to escape from the older obligations to imitate the real world with fidelity and

feats of illusion achieved through draftsmanship and perspective. But such modernism, Danto maintains, is now no more than "a trickle" in the contemporary outpouring of talent, and its extreme practitioners—Jackson Pollock with his drips or Ad Reinhardt with his rectangles—have no strong stake in the future. Modernism's "master narrative" about paint and flatness and arresting surfaces is over.

Yet Danto's "end" of art is far from an apocalyptic vision; rather it is the end of two mandates, traditional imitation and modernist expression. Danto's "post-historical" era sounds as though it will extend forever—and contain anything as a possibility. Anything, that is, except the "exclusionary" demands of the past. From Giotto to Pollock, Danto argues, art was supposed to meet certain expectations, certain demands about form

laid down by critics ranging from Vasari in the fifteenth century to Clement Greenberg in the 1950s. Now, at last, art is free of the burden of such obligations.

Postmodern art, according to Danto, is free from all the prescriptive philosophies that might have formerly said of a given work: "It's not art." Danto rejects Immanuel Kant's distinction between the beautiful and the useful, and Kant's idea of taste and the emphasis on the satisfaction found in the art object itself. He also rejects Clement Greenberg's insistence that the practiced eye of the critic can discriminate between art and trivia. Nor can Danto accept any other definitions about what art might require. Hegel is the thinker Danto embraces in arguing that the modern viewer's situation is different from that of our ancestors who lived in an unreflective past when all that was required was "enjoyment."

Now, in this age of enlightenment, our task is "knowing philosophically what art is." Danto's essays deal variously with this insight. Today it means

INSTITUTE OF PASTORAL STUDIES

Loyola University Chicago

♦MASTERS DEGREE PROGRAMS

*DIVINITY, PASTORAL STUDIES, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION,
AND M.A. PASTORAL COUNSELING*

♦INDIVIDUALIZED SABBATICALS

♦FORMATION PROGRAM

♦INSTITUTO HISPANO ♦WORKSHOPS

.....
For further information, call or write:

IPS, LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
6525 N. SHERIDAN ROAD
CHICAGO, IL 60626
773-508-2320, 800-424-1238
FAX 773-508-2319
<http://www/luc.edu/depts/ips>



that we can't look to visual things and mere sensuous experience to understand a work; we have to judge a Brillo box or an installation of objects by the questions of meaning it poses. In short, aesthetic considerations are no longer the determinants in evaluation—instead the viewer is involved in an adventure in ontology, in figuring out what an artifact (often one with no beauty or harmony) means. Along with Hegel, Danto likes the ideas of Marcel Duchamp, a painter and conceptual artist whose

jokey art of found objects defied the idea of high art and led to the golden age (for Danto) of Pop and beyond.

It's difficult to get any traction on the surfaces of such an argument—or much guidance in judging the contemporary art world. For starters, Danto has bound us to an intellectual game that is interesting and relevant to the history of philosophy, but largely irrelevant to viewing a work of visual art. He has essentially substituted an intellectual enterprise for the shock of encountering a

new work. Beyond that, he is quite naive in his anything-is-possible vision. Actually, certain things will more probably triumph in the art world of today and tomorrow than other things—unless the critic's judgment says no. The mall, the movie studio, and the multinational corporation may increasingly become the artist's muse. Various kinds of propaganda art may continue to get more recognition than well-crafted modern paintings and sculptures without simple meanings and messages. The abandonment of critical vigilance has consequences. Danto has an unfortunate tendency to label the modernist movement in terms of "elitism" and to view taste as a bourgeois power play. The bold pronouncements of modern painters and critics are compared dubiously to "totalitarianism."

Danto knows better, and has, for example, offered some quite sensible discriminations about the 1993 Whitney Biennial in his volume *Embodied Meanings* (1994). But he now seems intoxicated by the rhetoric of postmodernism. By this I mean that he is willing to use those favorite postmodern pastimes—irony, possibility, pluralism, eclecticism—in place of solid aesthetic standards. At this point he is saying that standards do not apply to the world of art after the 1960s. I see this anything-is-possible philosophy as another attempt to rationalize what we are often stuck with—a *faux* avant-garde. Danto hasn't considered that Old Man Modernism—with its forms and experiments in paint and stone—may live a long time and ignite many new talents. The master narrative of modernism may at present be overshadowed by a variety of postmodern trends, but what Danto characterizes as the present "trickle" of modernism may again become a broad current, a renaissance that will look back on the triumphant modernism of the early twentieth century as *quattrocento* artists did on the ancient world. □

David Castronovo is professor of English at Pace University, New York. His latest book, a critical study of the American novelist Richard Yates, was written in collaboration with Steven Goldleaf.

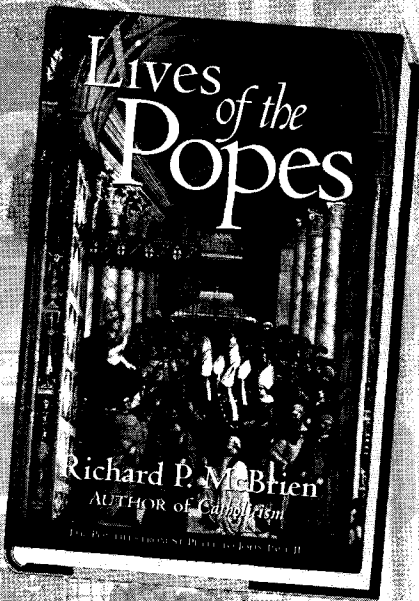
From RICHARD P. MCBRIEN,
author of the bestseller *Catholicism*

THE PAPACY—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

"Reading McBrien's *Lives of the Popes* is like exploring a family genealogy: among the 260 pontiffs listed—from St. Peter to John Paul II—one discovers both the saintly and the sinful, the intelligent and the inept, the prophetic and the problematic. In this book, readers will find not only many fascinating facts about the popes, but broader and thought-provoking theological questions about the nature of the papacy—past, present, and future."
—JOHN T. FORD, C.S.C.,
The Catholic University of America

"Vintage McBrien: timely, provocative, clear, and well-researched."—REV. PATRICK GRANFIELD, O.S.B., The Catholic University of America

"One of America's most penetrating Catholic writers."
—MOST REV. AND RT. HON. GEORGE CAREY, Archbishop of Canterbury



HarperSanFrancisco
A Division of HarperCollins Publishers

WHY DETROIT FELL APART

The Origins of the Urban Crisis

Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit

Thomas Sugrue

Princeton University Press, \$35, 408 pp.

John Buell

Perhaps the most fashionable argument for the persistence of urban poverty is the "culture of poverty," a thesis associated with the neoconservatives' emphasis on "values." The breakdown of the family, the concentration of the poor, and the absence of good role models are cited as principal causes of poverty. Looking at many inner-city neighborhoods today, one can find at least superficial evidence to support this contention.

Nonetheless, this line of argument is historically myopic. Thomas Sugrue's careful work documents the ways in which patterns of racial separation and corporate power helped foster and entrench urban poverty. More impressively, Sugrue suggests that the fluctuations of job markets, especially for unskilled workers, and racial or ethnic neighborhood boundaries interacted to produce high levels of unemployment and racial isolation in the cities.

The story begins with Detroit's wartime role as the "arsenal of democracy." The conversion of the auto industry to military production encouraged the influx of blacks to the city. Blacks came with the same hopes and dreams as other Americans, to purchase homes and make better lives for their children.

Until the war, most blacks living in Detroit had been confined to domestic, hotel, restaurant, and maintenance work. Wartime labor shortages resulted in the auto industry opening new jobs to minorities. Yet even amidst the wartime boom, blacks were generally given the

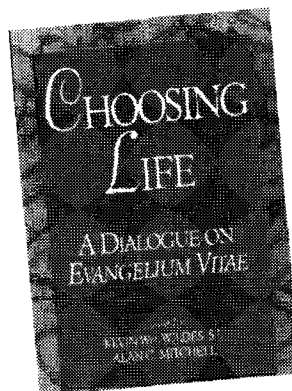
dirtyest and most dangerous industrial jobs. After the vast social changes brought about by the war, the industry continued to discriminate. Both management and the unions left hiring largely to the discretion of individual plant managers, and many factories were essentially white bastions. By the late forties and early fifties, blacks were most heavily represented in the least desirable and most dangerous jobs and had almost no presence in the skilled trades.

Housing in Detroit followed an apartheid pattern that was sustained by real estate practices, restrictive covenants, and even federal lending policies. Sugrue shows how housing patterns both reflected and reinforced racial boundaries and racial identities. Confined to crowded areas of the city and with limited access to lending institutions, blacks paid inflated prices for inferior housing. They

"could not get loans to improve their property. As a result, their homes deteriorated....Moreover, the deteriorating neighborhoods offered seemingly convincing evidence to white landowners that blacks were feckless and irresponsible...and would ruin any white neighborhood they moved into."

Unlike previous generations of immigrants, Detroit's black community almost immediately had to face the massive de-industrialization that started in the auto industry as early as the fifties. Concerned about union power, General Motors and Ford began automating and moving production to the suburbs as well as to plants in the rural South. To reduce the number of new hires and control costs, auto manufacturers also started imposing overtime on the most skilled workers.

For blacks these trends meant that the generation born in the late forties and fifties could no longer realistically hope for what many of their fathers had achieved: reasonable pay, albeit for hard and difficult work. For white workers de-industrialization also meant wage



Choosing Life

A Dialogue on Evangelium Vitae

Kevin Wm. Wildes, S.J., and
Alan C. Mitchell, Editors

Scholars from a wide range of disciplines—law, medicine, philosophy, and theology—and various religious perspectives discuss and interpret the Pope's teachings on the sacredness of

human life. The essays examine issues of methodology and ecclesiology, the themes of law and technology, and the specific topics of abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, medical experimentation, and capital punishment.

288 pp. November 1997

Paper: ISBN 0-87840-646-8 \$24.95

At Bookstores, or from

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY PRESS

P.O. Box 4866 Hampden Station, Baltimore, MD 21211-4866

Phone: 800-246-9606 or 410-516-6995 Fax: 410-516-6998

stagnation and diminished hopes that their children might go to college and escape the industrial life altogether. In such a context, many working-class whites held onto an increasingly localized and exclusive version of their American dream. They resisted efforts to build public housing and often vandalized houses purchased by blacks in white neighborhoods. Working-class whites sought to shore up their one major asset and protect an ideal of home and family that they thought was threatened

more by blacks than by their own growing economic insecurity.

Throughout the fifties and sixties, Detroit and other major industrial cities were shaken by conflicts over housing, a declining manufacturing base, and staggering rates of unemployment among blacks. At best, most young blacks could get temporary jobs, and could get these only by "loitering" in the "casual labor markets" located at certain street corners. These economic realities exacerbated racial tensions and

stereotypes. Fear and anger led to predictable results. In Detroit, sporadic crime and violence were followed by one of the worst race riots in U. S. history in 1967. Urban rioting propelled many white ethnics into Nixon's "silent majority," a shift in voting patterns that eventually culminated in the "Reagan Democrats."

Sugrue's work is a sad tale of misunderstanding and unnecessary resentments, but to his great credit he does not present it as an inexorable journey. Conflicts over housing and jobs in a stagnant economy and a history of racial innuendo and violence—not perceived liberal weakness on crime and race—prepared the way for the shattering of the New Deal coalition that united the poor and the middle class. Liberals, labor, and civil-rights organizations could not match the power of corporations in shaping economic conditions. But, Sugrue notes, neither were they completely powerless or above reproach. In 1951, workers at UAW local 600, Ford's giant River Rouge facility, recognized that de-industrialization was a threat to workers. And they knew that shortening working hours through curbs on overtime would create more jobs and improve the quality of life for all. But UAW President Walter Reuther insisted that the union focus on organizing workers in the new rural locations and seek continual wage growth rather than work to reduce hours and expand the number of jobs.

Many, though not all, of those in the labor movement who were interested in building interracial coalitions to challenge corporate power over factory location and working hours were Communist-connected and advocated government ownership of domestic industry. The lack of an indigenous, non-Communist progressive movement committed to building counterweights to the power of both corporations and state bureaucracies left few alternatives to Reuther's increasingly narrow vision. Moreover, civil rights organizations, focusing on job training and interview skills for potential white-collar workers, neglected to combat the economic forces eroding working-class jobs. In addition, Great Society job training pro-

New Fall Titles from Sheed & Ward

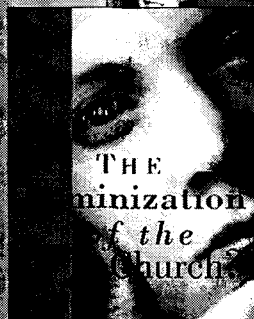


Their Faith Has Touched Us **The Legacies of Three Young Oklahoma City Bombing Victims**

by Maria Ruiz Scaperlanda

The stories of how three young people, their lives ended so prematurely by the bombing in Oklahoma City, profoundly affected and changed the lives of countless individuals whose lives they touched in their short time on earth.

1-58051-023-X, 250 pp, pb, \$12.95

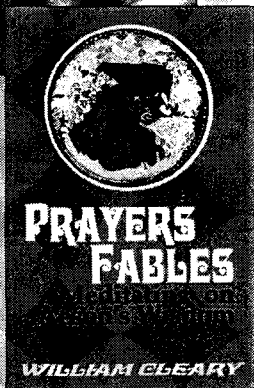


The Feminization of the Church?

by Kaye Ashe, O.P.

Explores the extent and nature of the feminization that has been occurring in the church. How has it affected women and spirituality, language, ethics, ministry, and leadership? How is the Church reacting to this feminization, and how is it affecting the life and future of the Church?

1-58051-028-0, 168 pp, pb, \$14.95



Prayers and Fables

Mediating on Aesop's Wisdom

by William Cleary

Aesop's fables retake their rightful place in the adult world in this witty adaptation. Fables inspire morals and quirky prayers that will teach you and make you laugh.

1-55612-960-2, 128 pp, pb, \$14.95

Ask for these titles at your bookstore, or call:

Sheed & Ward

800-333-7373 • PO Box 419492

Kansas City, MO • 64141

www.natcath.com/sheedward

grams expended much money with little impact, thereby fueling a growing antigovernment mood in the nation.

The so-called "culture of poverty" does encourage self-destructive behavior. Supporting the educational, neighborhood, and family structures that can ameliorate such pathologies should be part of any economic rejuvenation. But parents and even the best schools aren't enough. As Sugrue's study makes clear, those who wish to rebuild inner cities must focus on the ways race and class interact in undermining the hopes of all young workers. □

John Buell is the author of *Politics by Other Means* (Illinois University Press).

IN BRIEF

Sacred Identity

Exploring a Theology of the Person

Jane Kopas

Paulist, \$11.95, 217 pp.

Liberation Theologies

The Global Pursuit of Justice

Alfred T. Hennelly, S.J.

Twenty-Third Publications, \$19.95, 382 pp.

Lawrence S. Cunningham

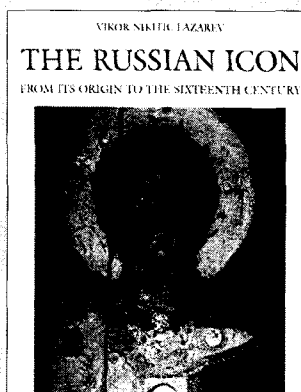
Jane Kopas has written an engaging book with an arresting angle: that a deep sense of what it means to be linked to a divine creator provides some thick metaphors concerning personal identity. Using a species of the theology of correlation, Kopas thinks through the anthropological and spiritual implications of such terms as the "hidden/revealing God," "creatureliness," "made in the image of God," and "kinship in creation." Her strategy is to juxtapose the biblical doctrine of creation and the person of Jesus Christ to human stories drawn from her own personal experiences and those gleaned from a wide variety of written sources.

Such an exercise is pregnant with possibility as anyone who has ever really

thought (as Saint Augustine and Jean Paul Sartre—to cite contrary instances—have done) about what it means to be dependent on and linked to a creator well understands. Kopas provides her reflections in well-written prose with a quite specific audience in mind: an educated lay audience/or a college class who may well believe in God but are not quite sure what kind of God it is they believe in.

From this brief synopsis it should not be thought that Kopas reflects on a narrowly vertical axis (that is, "myself and

God"). Like John Paul II, Kopas understands that the full context of the Genesis creation account demands that human beings be seen in the context of place and in the context of community. That allows her to link her human metaphors not only vertically to the Creator but horizontally to both human and natural ecologies of dependence and limits. She understands our interdependence with others, with creation, and with God not by appealing to the fadish tropes of "creation spirituality" but



THE RUSSIAN ICON

From Its Origins to the Sixteenth Century

Viktor Nikitich Lazarev;

Colette Joly Dees, Translator;

English Text Edited by Nancy McDarby

Russian icons are a "rediscovery" of the twentieth century. It was only after they had been cleaned of dark varnishes and repainting that their intrinsic value

appeared in its true light, permitting people to study them scientifically and once again experience their spiritual power and depth.

In this volume 224 pages of stunning full-color prints of Russian icons combine with 140 pages of descriptive text by Viktor Nikitich Lazarev, the acknowledged master, teacher, and critic of Russian fine art, to create a brilliant and memorable work on Russian iconography.

Updated and paired with unprecedented photography only now possible in a post-confederation world, this volume provides a rich history of the Russian icon from its origins in the eleventh century

to its golden age in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and ending with its rapid decline in the sixteenth century.

2452-9 Hardcover, 404 pp., 9 1/8 x 11 3/4, \$99.95

Rights: World

THE LITURGICAL PRESS

St. John's Abbey • P.O. Box 7500 • Collegeville, MN 56321-7500

Phone: 1-800-858-5450 Fax: 1-800-445-5899

Internet: www.litpress.org E-mail: sales@litpress.org

to the more sober realism (she has some good pages on "finitude" and "sin"—no Pollyanna she) of the biblical/theological tradition holistically conceived. The result is a lively and readable book which shows how a serious college teacher and theologically reflective writer can bring forth from the ancient pages of Genesis both old things and new.

Near the conclusion of his book, Alfred T. Hennelly writes that readers may well feel as if they have gone around the world in eighty days. Well, not quite,

but this useful *vademecum* of liberation theologies does survey recent writings produced, *inter alia*, by Latin Americans, Africans, Asians, Hispanic- and Black-Americans as well as a rapid summary of ecotheologies, world religions, and recent discussions about the uniqueness of Christ. This is a theological world with which Hennelly is quite familiar, and about which, over the years, he has written abundantly.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church suggests that liberation theologies (the

plural is appropriate) never existed while neoconservative commentators now assure us that their day is over. It is, however, an incontestable fact that not only have liberation theologies had a shaping influence on the church but the liberationists have framed issues in such a manner that their questions become unavoidable and the methodologies that they favor are, in one way or another, a powerful influence on how theology is now done. The liberation theologians have brought history and experience to the fore of theological reflection.

Hennelly's work is not a constructive theology nor is it even a comprehensive history of liberation theology; it is rather a horizon tour of the main writers, their significant works, the issues that they raise, and the perspectives from which they raise those issues. The last, I think, is the most interesting question. What the liberationists have in common is the desire to reflect theologically from a quite specific and historically circumscribed situation: What does the gospel *mean* in the Buddhist world of Sri Lanka (A. Pieris)? Is there a way of holding up Christ, the Alpha and Omega, that is true to the cultures of Africa (Benezet Buzo)? How does a Hispanic-American Catholic woman define her place in the light of her culture (Maria Pilar Aquino)?

It was the great insight of Gustavo Gutierrez, the veteran liberation theologian (and one of the most intellectually insightful), to see that theology would be radically different if it were written in the slums of Lima and not in the seminar rooms of Tübingen. One of the reasons why Hennelly could subtitle his work "The Global Pursuit of Justice" is that all these theologians have in common a sense that there are a lot of people out there who do not share in the common goods of the earth. The best of the liberation theologians (Hennelly would do well to chasten some of the overheated rhetoric and special pleading of some of them) resist the temptation to provide solutions to these great problems, but they see it as a fundamental duty to do, in the words of Richard McCormick quoted by Hennelly, what the Christian tradition does

fall books from

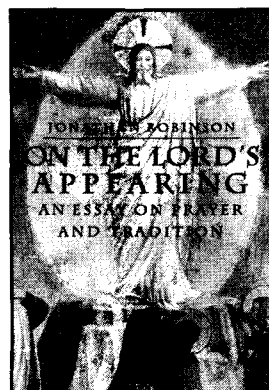
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA PRESS

On the Lord's Appearing

An Essay on Prayer and Tradition
JONATHAN ROBINSON

A rich and inspiring meditation on personal prayer in the tradition of the Catholic Church.

"Drawing on Newman, St. Philip Neri, and other classical writers, Father Robinson puts us in touch with the ways the mystery of Christ has been lived by faithful Christians in their life of prayer from the apostolic age to our own time. A balanced and very helpful book!"—David L. Schindler, *Communio*
\$39.95 cloth / \$19.95 paper



Christian Marriage Today

Klaus Demmer &
A. Brenninkmeijer-Werhahn, Editors

Addresses the social and spiritual emergency of Christian marriage today. Going beyond a strictly theological evaluation, the authors examine the subject from a pastoral viewpoint and address the praxis situation of couples trying to live out the implications of the sacrament.
\$23.95 cloth / \$13.95 paper

Varieties of Ultramontanism

Jeffrey von Arx, S.J., Editor

Explores the differing views of six ultramontane cardinals on papal authority. The contributors are: †John Ciani, S.J., Gerald Fogarty, S.J., Emmet Larkin, John W. Padberg, S.J., Jeffrey von Arx, S.J., and Eric Yonke.
\$34.95 cl / \$19.95 pa



Available from your bookstore or from

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA PRESS

P.O. Box 4852, Hampden Station, Baltimore, MD 21211 410/516-6953

best: be "more a value raiser than a problem solver."

By my estimation, there are about five linear feet of liberation theology volumes in my study. What Hennelly has done is give us a roadmap to work our way through the vast outpouring of those writers who think theologically in places as distant (from us) as El Salvador, Korea, the Philippines, Africa, and Sri Lanka. Each chapter of the book has a suggested reading list and discussion questions as well as a good index and bibliography. It is a user-friendly work which should find a useful place in a classroom setting. □

Lawrence S. Cunningham teaches theology at the University of Notre Dame.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 4)

ence? By the way, what purpose does the atheistic accountant serve? And how does an atypical-looking nun undergird the Catholic faith by spouting bits of "inclusive God language" and prayers to Buddha?

This show has all the earmarks of entertainment and nothing more.

D.D. HOOK
Milton, Del.

From the editors: Our correspondent has one thing right: Yes, "Nothing Sacred" is (was?) designed to entertain, and, as Frank McConnell noted, to sell the sponsors' products. But that in itself is not grounds for condemnation. Neither, in our view, are the less-than-edifying aspects of the program singled out in this letter. Without suggesting that "Nothing Sacred" is in the same league with *The Power and the Glory*, *The Diary of a Country Priest*, or the works of Flannery O'Connor, one might inquire why Graham Greene's priest-protagonist is a hard-core alcoholic, why Georges Bernanos depicted a pastor struggling with despair, why O'Connor's profoundly religious characters are such weirdos. These authors weren't trying to subvert Christian values, nor to depict a sinless church-

that-never-was. One advantage they had over today's TV producers: they didn't have to be funny.

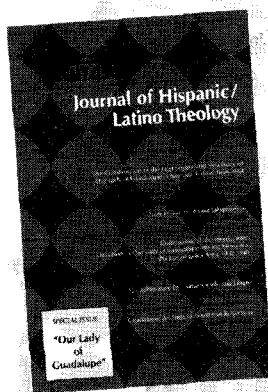
What was the FBI after?

It may be only a trial lawyer's skepticism of police investigations, but I read Victor Ferkiss's story about the search for the Unabomber ["The FBI Comes Calling," September 26] in quite a different way than with the humorous spin he gives it. I believe that Ferkiss and the handful of others

the Feds entertained in San Francisco in 1995 were the targets of that investigation, not consultants. And, if Ted Kaczinski's brother had not been perceptive and courageous enough to turn his brother in, raids on some academics' offices would probably have followed. The Feds, especially the AFT [Alcohol, Firearms, and Tobacco Bureau], love to do raids!

Supporting my suspicion is the thought that despite a million-dollars-per-year budget and a force of

DISCOVER THE SOURCE FOR THEOLOGY THAT CROSSES
NATIONAL, CULTURAL, AND LINGUISTIC BORDERS



JOURNAL OF HISPANIC/LATINO THEOLOGY

Following the highest standards of scholarship in professional theology, the *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology* (JHLT) publishes research results and promotes the ongoing discussion of issues concerning the Christian community today. An important and challenging witness to the need for diversity in the Christian tradition, JHLT is committed to scholarship that is academically sound and socially engaged.

JHLT is published in English for a professional audience by the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians of the United States (ACHTUS). Its focus on the concerns of pastoral theology and wide-ranging issues reflects the international, ecumenical, and interdisciplinary composition of its editorial board and board of contributing editors.

Participate in the rich theological conversation that crosses national, cultural, and linguistic borders. Subscribe today!

Subscription: \$26.00, one year (4 issues);
\$49.00, two years
Foreign: \$30.00, one year; \$57.00, two years
Libraries: \$40.00
Single copy: \$7.00

"AN INDISPENSABLE
RESOURCE
FOR FOLLOWING
DEVELOPMENTS
IN ONE
OF THE MOST
INTERESTING
AREAS OF
THEOLOGY IN
NORTH AMERICA
TODAY."

Robert J. Schreiter, Professor
Catholic Theological Union

JOURNAL OF HISPANIC/LATINO THEOLOGY

St. John's Abbey • P.O. Box 7500 • Collegeville, MN 56321-7500

Call 1-800-858-5450, ext. 2223, or fax 1-800-445-5899

www.litpress.org • E-mail: sales@litpress.org

hundreds at work, from at least three major investigative agencies, the only information that had been developed prior to the meeting, other than (probably) analyses of postal data and explosive residues, was the textual analysis of the Unabomber's manifesto.

There was no justification at all that I could see for the development of the investigators' profile. The textual analysis itself would have suggested that an egghead type, like the

founder of the Shining Path—not a Bell Telephone repairman who may have found a copy of *The Future of Technological Civilization* in the local library—was involved. I think the profile was a diversion.

PAUL A. LOCKREY, ESQ.
Philadelphia, Pa.

Who's in charge here?

Was it coincidence that your question, "Can Rome Run Catholic Colleges?" appeared on your cover

[September 26] referring to Paul Saunders's article "The Vatican, the Academy, the Bishops"—only two days before the twenty-sixth Sunday in ordinary time? For, daunting as the dilemma may be, between preserving academic freedom and acknowledging Rome's felt need to guard orthodoxy, the solution seems to have been found two, or even three, millennia ago—at least if we believe the Scripture readings for that Sunday.

According to Numbers [11:24-29], Joshua wanted Moses to stop the two elders, Eldad and Medad, from prophesying in the camp, for they had been absent when the Lord bestowed some of the spirit that was on Moses on some of the other elders. Moses said: "Would that all the people of the Lord were prophets! Would that the Lord might bestow his spirit on them all!" *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* remarks: "The acknowledgment of Eldad and Modad's prophetic charism by Moses, against the objections of Joshua, serves to protect the independence of the prophetic office from those who would subject it to institutional control."

About a thousand years later, according to Mark [9:38-41], John, one of the Twelve, wanted to prohibit an exorcist from driving out demons in Jesus' name, because he was not one of the disciples. Jesus replied: "Do not prevent him;...whoever is not against us is for us."

So: If Rome wants to have a say in the appointment of specialized faculty awarding "pontifical" degrees, let it have that say. But for theology courses in general, even more so for nontheological courses, let the colleges decide for themselves whether they want to consider themselves "Catholic"; that is, to exorcise the spirit of ignorance in the name of Jesus, or merely by the light of human reason.

This gets yet more compelling if one considers the words of the very same pope in whose name all these edicts are coming down, in his first

HENDRICKSON PUBLISHERS

JESUS OF NAZARETH *Message and History*

JOACHIM GNILKA

TRANSLATED BY SIEGFRIED SCHATZMANN

"What is presented here is not a life of Jesus. . . . The focal point is the message and history of Jesus, with the emphasis being on the message. . . . Hence it is hoped that this book will assist the reader in gaining a portrait of the Jesus who was the pivot of the times."

— From the preface

ISBN 1-56563-164-1 • \$24.95 • Cloth • Fall 1997

THE OLD TESTAMENT *Text and Context*

VICTOR H. MATTHEWS AND JAMES C. MOYER

Written primarily for the beginning student in a university context, this work introduces the literature, history, and social context of the Old Testament. Numerous charts, diagrams, maps, and pictures assist in presenting the information essential to understanding the Old Testament.

ISBN 1-56563-168-4 • \$29.95 • Paper • Available

THEOLOGICAL LEXICON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT *3 volumes*

ERNST JENNI AND CLAUS WESTERMANN

TRANSLATED BY MARK E. BIDDLE

Now available in English, this standard German lexical reference provides a wealth of theological insight for academic study, preaching and teaching the Old Testament. Added features make this an easily accessible and valuable resource for students of any level: entries are keyed to *Brown-Driver-Briggs*, *Strong's Concordance*, and the *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, as well as other important lexical tools.

ISBN 1-56563-133-1 • \$119.95 • Cloth • Available

WOMEN, CLASS, AND SOCIETY IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY *Models from Luke-Acts*

JAMES MALCOLM ARLANDSON

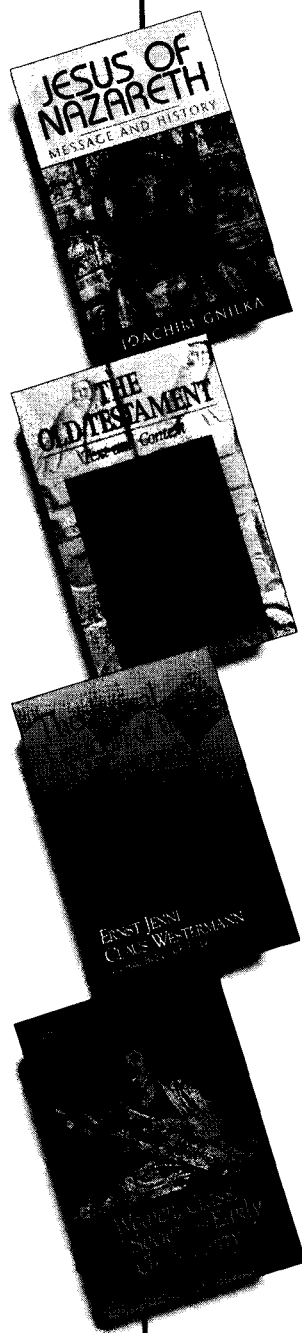
Explore the varied roles of women in the ancient world as well as the gospel's impact on them in this challenging investigation. An essential resource for anyone interested in women's studies.

"This work is a substantive contribution to the current efforts to use insights from social theory to illustrate the biblical text."

— Howard C. Kee, Professor Emeritus, Boston University

ISBN 1-56563-181-1 • \$24.95 • Cloth • Available

Available at your bookstore or call toll-free: 800-358-3111,
outside the U.S.: 978-532-6564,
e-mail: orders@hendrickson.com,
or fax: 978-573-8111.



American best seller, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*: "Faith...demands that we reexamine certain excessively rigid schemata—for example, the distinction between the *teaching* church and the *learning* church must take into consideration the fact that each of the baptized participates, albeit at his own level, in the prophetic...mission of Christ....[W]e are talking not only about changing concepts but also of renewing attitudes." [Italics in the original.] So: Let's walk the talk.

EDMUND F. KAL, M.D.
Fresno, Calif.

An 'n' slipped in

Just a note: In the ad for the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* in the issue of September 26 [page 25], isn't Marthaler's first name *Berard* rather than *Bernard*? Different Marthaler?

ANN MEYERS
Rochester, Ind.

From the editors: Good catch: It's Berard. Somebody should explain this to the publishers, who sent us camera-ready copy for the ad.

McCarraher hurrah!

I am not a regular reader of *Commonweal* but after the September 12 issue, I must seriously think of becoming one. Eugene McCarraher's article, "Smile, When You Say 'Laity,'" is not only brilliant but is vitally important for understanding the contemporary state of the Catholic church in the United States. I have called all my friends and demanded that they read the article, because it draws together what have seemed to be disparate signs of a deep malaise that afflicts the church in America.

McCarraher identifies the source of the all-pervading spirit in American Catholicism which threatens the very integrity of the Catholic faith: the imposition of a managerial-therapeutic model on the church by a laity trained not in the doctrines of Christianity but rather in the managed phoniness of corporate America.

My own interest is the liturgy. I have often spoken against what I call

Brady Bunch Catholicism in the radically horizontal, feel-good, sacro-pop Masses. But McCarraher correctly situates the current state of the liturgy in the all-encompassing state of contemporary religious culture: a "Starbucks Catholicism embodied in a Church Mellow."

(REV.) RICHARD G. CIPOLLA
Fairfield, Conn

From the editors: Additional comments on the McCarraher article,

along with a response by the author, will appear in the issue of November 21.

The blame game

A. J. Bacevich's "On Not Forgiving Robert S. McNamara" [September 12] brought to mind several thoughts having to do not only with "War and Remembrance" but also what might be called "War and Selective Forgetting."

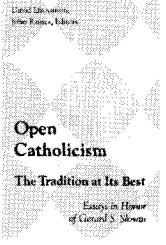
Bacevich served in Vietnam; others

New TITLES

FALL 1997

Open Catholicism

The Tradition at Its Best: Essays in Honor of Gerard S. Sloyan



United States, Other Editors, Editors

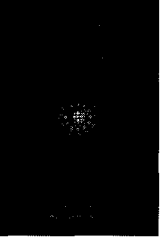
David Efroymsen and John Raines, Editors

This collection of essays honoring Father Sloyan by his colleagues, friends, and former students probes the most crucial concepts in the Catholic tradition: God, Jesus, Church, ethics, liturgy, religious education, Catholic-Muslim relations, and Catholicism itself. It also includes a brief "intellectual autobiography" by Father Sloyan and a bibliography of his writings published during the last forty-five years.

5879-2 Paper, 232 pp., 6 x 9, \$19.95

The Windows of Faith

Prayers of Holy Hildegard



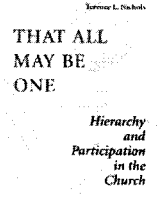
Hildegard of Bingen; Walburga Storch, O.S.B., Editor; Linda M. Maloney, Translator

God is self-revealed as "through a window" to those who look to God in faith. For Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), one of the first and greatest medieval mystics, to pray meant to stand at the window of faith, to see, to hear, to respond and to be responsible. This book, a prayerful selection of Hildegard's visionary and prophetic writings, encourages us all to look through the "windows of faith."

2448-0 Hardcover, 104 pp., 5 3/8 x 8 1/4, \$13.95

That All May Be One

Hierarchy and Participation in the Church



Terence L. Nichols

Terence L. Nichols

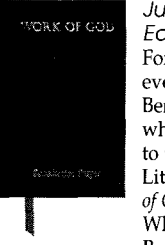
Must hierarchy mean dominance, patriarchy, and oppression? Or is there an alternative view of hierarchy?

To Nichols the notion of hierarchy as domination is distorted, because hierarchy's role is to preserve apostolic teaching and the unity of the Church, and to foster participation and integration. Nichols details his notion of participatory hierarchy, grounding it in Scripture and in Christian tradition.

5857-1 Paper, 368 pp., 6 x 9, \$29.95

Work of God

Benedictine Prayer



Judith Suter, O.S.B., Editor

Judith Suter, O.S.B., Editor

For those looking for an everyday grounding in Benedictine spirituality and who wish to pray according to the Benedictine style of Liturgy of the Hours, *Work of God* is an ideal resource. While written primarily for Benedictine oblates, this simple yet elegant prayerbook also gives the unfamiliar user a starting place from which to progress into a more intense practice. It contains a two-week arrangement of morning and evening prayer and essays that provide an introduction to monastic spirituality.

2431-6 Hardcover, 256 pp., 4 1/4 x 6 3/4, \$19.95

Available from your religious bookstore or



THE LITURGICAL PRESS

P.O. Box 7500, Collegeville, MN 56321-7500

phone: 1-800-858-5450

fax: 1-800-445-5899

www.litpress.org

e-mail: sales@litpress.org

took different paths in those years. Some, including myself, feebly "protested" while safely in college by supporting the candidacies of Robert Kennedy or Eugene McCarthy. Others took bolder stances by active resistance. Many recognized that American involvement in Vietnam was a colossal mistake, as McNamara and others refused to acknowledge until recently, and as some still do not. Saying "I told you so!" is unfashionable these days; it is seen as espe-

cially insensitive to Vietnam veterans as they returned, wounded in body and soul, from McNamara's (or Johnson's, Kennedy's, Eisenhower's) war. Having paid a heavy price for our government's policies, these veterans still await a full redress of their grievances.

But correcting that imbalance still seems to require holding antiwar protesters to a patriotism test: President Bill Clinton, a feeble protester like myself, or Dan Quayle, or that

continuing target of veterans' groups, Jane Fonda. Meantime we selectively forget that others *chose* to follow the "Judas goat" into the rice fields of Southeast Asia—or, at least, did not take evasive action or engage in outright protest. If their consciences need cleansing, they ought to grant an opportunity for repentance to Robert McNamara and others like him. Unlike lemmings or sheep who follow the herd, or the Judas goat, people always have choices; blaming leaders alone for the errors of our ways is not only scapegoating but escapism, especially in a democracy. It establishes a bad precedent for other difficult choices we still need to make in our nation's political and moral life.

(REV.) DAVID J. NORRIS
Hilmar, Calif.

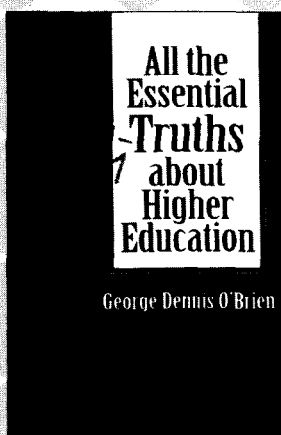
"O'Brien has written a book that is perceptively intelligent, carefully balanced, and absolutely honest.

Both Aristotle and Diogenes would be proud."

—Mel Elfin, education editor of *U.S. News and World Report* and editor of *America's Best Colleges*

All the Essential Half-Truths about Higher Education

George Dennis O'Brien



"O'Brien discusses how whole truths gradually became half-truths within an institutional environment, and he offers suggestions for rectifying the situation. His ultimate goal is to make readers think about who will decide the future of higher education, and what principles will govern their decisions." —*Library Journal*

Cloth \$19.95

The University of Chicago Press

5801 South Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637 Visit us at <http://www.press.uchicago.edu>

CLASSIFIED

RATES: \$1.10 per word; 12 word minimum. Discounts 5 percent, 3 times; 10 percent, 6 times; 15 percent, 12 times. Advance payment required. Discounts and monthly billing available for repeat advertisers. For additional information call 212-662-4200 or write COMMONWEAL, 475 Riverside Dr., Rm. 405, N.Y., N.Y. 10115.

Ministry Program

WANT TO BE A PRIEST, RELIGIOUS, LAY MINISTER (MALE OR FEMALE) IN THE CHURCH? Mater Dei Institute for Ministry Formation. Providing theological degrees and pastoral leadership preparation. Write: Mater Dei, Gonzaga University, 405 E. Sinto, Spokane, WA 99202-1849. 1-800-633-2252, ext. 360. Financial help available.

Manuscripts Wanted

MANUSCRIPTS WANTED. ALL TYPES. Subsidy Publisher with 75-year tradition. 1-800-695-9599.

Degree Completion Program

"ALL BUT THE DISSERTATION." Accelerated Degree Completion Program. Short-term Oxford residency with faculty-supervised dissertation required. Sponsored by the Graduate Theological Foundation in association with the Tutorial Director of the Oxford Foundation Fellowship Program. Information 1-800-423-5983.

A COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S ABC's

William J. Rewak

For some years I have been doing an informal study, by interviewing college students, faculty and staff, and other presidents, on the qualifications expected of a college president. From my "study" I have determined that the perfect college president is:

A. Thirty-eight years of age, vibrant, healthy, and youthful, with a futuristic attitude; has grey hair, with lines of experience in the brow; exhibits a warm, mature, presidential demeanor; and has great regard for change and tradition.

B. Is amiable, personable, understanding, forgiving, humorous and truthful; is always businesslike, serious, and does not suffer fools gladly.

C. Limits all official talks to fourteen minutes, while addressing local controversies, national educational issues, specific long-range plans, development prospects, budgetary concerns, and on-campus parking.

D. Works all daylight hours, and at night, paying attention to necessary details, including picking up beer cans and newspapers off the lawn.

E. Has a spiritual-philosophical bent that allows him/her to dream dreams, create a vision in clearly articulated long-range plans, and to charismatically mobilize the faculty and staff toward higher achievement; combined with a severe pragmatic personality that is impatient with infighters, adept at solving emergency budgetary and plumbing problems, and resolving disputes between the athletic department and the faculty.

F. Is in the education field because of a desire to work with students; spends all available time with alumni, benefactors, corporate presidents, and parents who complain that their children don't receive enough financial aid and don't spend enough time with the fac-

ulty and administrators.

G. Allocates 75 percent of the day to raising funds, but never discusses money.

H. Is always available in the office, sits on ten boards, participates in national and international meetings, attends most local banquets, works with community organizations and gives weekly addresses in the community, accepts dinner invitations five times a week, testifies annually before state and federal legislators for an increase in student financial aid, and spends quality time with the family (or his/her religious community).

I. Gets through approximately 500 pages of reading material a day.

J. Condemns laziness in the classroom and drunkenness in the residence halls, but in an off-hand manner, lest anyone be unduly grieved.

K. Is dedicated to the physical and mental health of students, their social maturity and developing spirituality, and allows keg parties, relaxed parietal hours, an open speaker's policy, and campus appearances by heavy metal bands.

L. Treats students as adults who take responsibility for their actions, but protects them from the police in matters of drug use, sexual abuse, violent and destructive behavior, theft, and harassment.

M. Keeps tuition, board, and room costs low but agrees to student demands for increased recreational opportunities, more diverse academic programs, smaller classes, resident computer capability, twenty-four-hour-a-day library service, and the option of steak every night.

N. Approves strict academic guidelines for admittance, and responds with understanding to alumni pleas for special consideration.

O. Has as the number-one priority in-

creasing funding for academic programs; another number-one priority of raising money for financial aid; another of raising money for the residence halls; and a final number-one priority of building a successful football team.

P. Provides on-campus parking for all faculty, staff, and students—immediately adjacent to their offices, classrooms, and residence halls.

Q. Supports every college policy wholeheartedly, while vetting each one in light of truth and justice issues.

R. Discusses, in a milieu of academic freedom, all issues openly and honestly, except those relating to serious privacy issues like tenure, salary, etc.

S. Speaks and acts in a politically correct manner so as not to offend any ethnic, racial, religious, political, sexual, gender, handicapped, or socio-economic denomination, yet is totally honest about others' shortcomings, prejudices, extremisms, and inconsistencies.

T. Keeps the campus's physical plant and grounds attractive and clean without squandering limited resources.

U. Creates a full complement of committees to allow for a broad variation of input; discourages bureaucracy.

V. Listens carefully to every constituency on campus while making decisions in a timely fashion.

W. Runs a democratic, representative campus; makes clear, just, and wise decisions; speaks and acts authoritatively.

X. Reduces administrative staff by 5 percent a year, but increases services.

Y. Reduces faculty workload by 10 percent while offering students more academic variety.

Z. Always presents a balanced budget to the board. □

William J. Rewak, S.J., is the former president of Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama.

† CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

HOPE

It's yours to give.



Through Ag Connect, young farmers like the Potter family are paired with retiring farmers like Paul and Nancy Mead to get the help they need to keep Iowa's family farm tradition alive. With support from the **Campaign for Human Development**, Ag Connect is a vital resource for retiring farmers and those just starting out, providing business planning assistance and avoiding heavy debt.

The Catholic Church Working to End Poverty and Injustice in America.

**Learn what we're doing to end poverty.
Call for a free subscription to our newsletter:**

1-800-946-4CHD

**Campaign for Human Development, 3211 Fourth Street NE, Washington DC 20017
www.nccbuscc.org/chd**